THE DICKENSIAN

A Magazine for Dickens Lovers

EDITED BY

LESLIE C. STAPLES

VOLUME
FORTY-TWO

KRAUS REPRINT
Nendeln/Liechtenstein
1971

Reprinted by permission of THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP, London

KRAUS REPRINT
A Division of
KRAUS-THOMSON ORGANIZATION LIMITED
Nendeln/Liechtenstein
1971

Printed in Germany
Lessingdruckerei Wiesbaden

Charles Dickens

A portrait by Samuel Lawrence

WINTER NUMBER, 1945/6
Vol. XLII, Part 1 Published 1st December No. 277

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A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR DICKENS LOVERS

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ILLUSTRATED

Published by The Dickens Fellowship

TEMPORARY ADDRESS
7 Lyme Terrace, LONDON, N.W.1.

The Dickens Fellowship

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At the Friends' House, Euston Road, N.W.1, on the first Saturday afternoon (except in January) of each month at 2-30 p.m.

January 12th—"The Old Order Changeth." Mrs. L. Capron.
Chairman: Frank S. Johnson.

February 2nd—"The Precursors and Influence of Dickens."
G. H. Stuart-Bunning, O.B.E.
Chairman: Miss Rose Smith-Rose.

February 9th—Birthday Celebration Luncheon. See below.

March 2nd—"Dickens's Unfinished Novel." T. S. Lascelles.
Chairman: T. W. Hill.

April 6th—"The Magic Loom of Dickens."
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CHATTO AND WINDUS

"Such was the progress of Mr. Pickwick and his friends"

by C. E. Brock, R.I.

From Messrs. Geo. Harrap's edition of *Pickwick* by their express permission

THE DICKENSIAN

WINTER NUMBER

VOL. XLII. 1ST DECEMBER, 1945 No. 277

WHEN FOUND—

THE chimes ring out joyously indeed this first Christmas of Peace—*Peace on Earth and Goodwill Toward Men.* Our Yuletide Greetings to all our readers. May the Christmas message which lay at the heart of the inspiration of the genius of Charles Dickens bring happiness to us all and give us confidence in our endeavours to build the new world which is to preserve the Peace for which we have striven so long. In those endeavours, may the spirit of Dickens be potent still.

* * * * *

The Latest Biography. Dame Una Pope-Hennessey's long expected book on Charles Dickens, reviewed by Mr. Ralph Straus on another page, is on the whole a good piece of work and will prove a mine of information for quick reference as it summarises effectively all the biographies that have appeared since Forster's great *Life*, and is founded largely on the three volumes of Dickens's letters published by the Nonesuch Press, edited by Walter Dexter, not easily available to the ordinary reader. Many omissions, unavoidable at the time when Forster wrote, are now filled in and a credible portrait of the novelist has emerged.

* * * * *

Not Proven. It detracts from the critical value of the book that it is not fully documented; all authorities should be named. It is impossible to know whether the opinions and conclusions expressed on many points are Dame Una's own or are derived from others. As regards the Ternan episode, the authoress appears to have swallowed Thomas Wright and Gladys Storey whole—bait, line and sinker—and has accepted their statements as proof positive. (The *Nonesuch Letters* provide no evidence whatever.) It cannot be too positively stated that all the evidence available at present is entirely circumstantial and in an English Court would not hang a dog. And even if the insinuations could be substantiated they will not reduce by one iota the stature of Dickens as a great English author—a classic, a supreme creator of laughter and tears, an ardent champion of the poor and oppressed. The book has received very wide publicity in the press and a number of newspapers have thought fit to make many wild and unfounded statements about Dickens which we do not think it worth while to repeat. They flourished but briefly like summer-flies. The news-sheets that bore them are already in waste-paper baskets or have found usefulness for wrapping fish.

* * * * *

A Summing Up. Charles Dickens was not superhuman; he was indeed a very human being with all a human being's weaknesses as well as strengths. At the time of the separation from his wife he wrote to his friend, De Cerjat (July 7th, 1858): "... I know well that I can never hope that anyone out of my house can ever comprehend my domestic story. I will not complain. I have been heavily wounded, but I have covered the wound up and left it to heal. ... I hope that my books will speak for themselves and me, when I

and my faults and virtues, my fortunes and misfortunes, are all forgotten." Let us leave it at that and bear in mind what Dr. Johnson said of Oliver Goldsmith on the death of the latter:

"Let not his frailties be remembered: He was a very great man."

* * * * *

Our Task. And now to get on with the objects for which the Dickens Fellowship exists: "To spread the love of humanity which is the keynote of all his work; to remedy or ameliorate existing social evils, and to help in every possible direction the cause of the poor and the oppressed; to assist in the preservation and purchase of buildings and objects associated with his name."

* * * * *

A Likeness. A new novel by Miss Monica Dickens, "Thursday Afternoons," has met with a very favourable press this autumn. Her publishers have been using a portrait of the popular authoress that is quite remarkable in its likeness to the celebrated portrait of her great-grandfather by Daniel Maclise.

* * * * *

Moses Pickwick. The Bath press recently bore an advertisement inserted by "Pickwick Farm," Swainswick, and an interesting note on this reaches us from Alderman T. Sturge Cotterell, who writes that the farm was run by the Pickwick family of Bath, coach proprietors from whom Dickens got the famous name. There, grasslands and cornfields were cultivated for the firm's horses and it remained in the possession of Moses Pickwick after the business had disappeared on the advent of the railways. Moses, at his death at the age of 87, was registered as a farmer, not as a coach-proprietor. In his old age, when he saw his famous White Hart Inn derelict and his coaches gone, he did not blame the railways, but *The Pickwick Papers*. No one of his name is to be found on the farm to-day, but it is still known as Pickwick Farm.

* * * * *

At the Theatre. Several very interesting dramatic adaptations of Dickens novels have to be recorded this season. "Mr. Pickwick," by Lionel Britton, was produced at Rugby and may be seen later elsewhere. The author has shuffled and reshuffled the characters and incidents in the book in the attempt to produce on the stage what he asserts was Dickens's aim in writing the novel, "to set off his characters in search of human nature and to show men by satire and laughter where human nature lay." We have received a report of the production from Mr. A. E. Leeson, of the Rugby Branch, who writes that although he enjoyed a clever and well-played performance, the effect of the familiar dialogue being given in entirely different circumstances from those in which it originally appeared was not successful, which seems hardly surprising. Indeed, the confusion of large numbers of characters making but brief appearances at unfamiliar places lead to little but mystification.

* * * * *

In Dublin. A new version of "A Tale of Two Cities" was seen at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, in September. Mr. Micheál MacLiamóir was responsible and he also played Carton. Mr. Hilton Edwards produced. The Irish press, while admitting that the very elaborate production was highly successful, does so grudgingly. It appears to believe that the grand old story is too melodramatic and sentimental for these latter days. Nevertheless it is bound to admit that the honest and well-rendered adaptation created an immense effect.

* * * * *

In London. A play adapted from part of *David Copperfield*, entitled "Meet Mr. Micawber," was produced at the Rudolf

Steiner Hall on November 14th. Written and produced by Edgar K. Bruce, the play provides a fitting frame for the colourful performance of the name part by the author. A serialised version of *The Old Curiosity Shop* has been a feature of the B.B.C's Childrens' Hour recently, in which the grandfather was played by O. B. Clarence.

* * * * *

Dr. Marigold. Finding himself in Ipswich recently, Mr. Frank S. Johnson, who has given recitals of *Dr. Marigold* so frequently, was reminded that it was in that town that the cheapjack courted his wife "from the footboard of the cart. She was a Suffolk young woman, and it was in Ipswich market place, right opposite the corn-chandler's shop." Mr. Johnson writes that opinions differ as to the market place in question. Although such characters occasionally used a "pitch" on the site of the present cattle market, local opinion inclines to the belief that the square (now altered) where St. Margaret Street and Woodbridge Road meet, was the place indicated by Dickens. Dickensian topographers seem to have hitherto neglected this little point. After yet another recital of the story, Mr. Johnson returned to his hotel to find himself in the company of a group of deaf and dumb people, who paid tribute to the faithful presentation of the affliction from which they suffered, in the pages of Dickens's beautiful Christmas Story. Mr. Johnson has determined to allocate the proceeds of collections taken after his future recitals of *Dr. Marigold* to deaf and dumb charities, and he suggests that the Fellowship might like to bear these sadly afflicted people in mind when seeking to extend its charitable activities. We most heartily endorse his thought.

* * * * * *

P.J.T. 1747. These mystic symbols so familiar to the readers of *Edwin Drood* will be seen no more in Staple Inn. After the destruction of Mr. Grewgious's house by enemy action, we enquired whether it had been possible to rescue the keystone over the doorway which bore the well-remembered inscription. The owners, The Prudential Assurance Company, inform us that it was made merely of plaster and that it crumbled with the rest of the house.

* * * * *

Ego. Mr. James Agate, in the latest volume of his delightful diary, "Ego 7," compares his output of rather more than six million words in twenty-five years with Dickens's five million and a half in thirty-four years. But in computing the total number of words in the novels, Mr. Agate overlooks the fact that Dickens wrote a prodigious number of letters, the fullest although still incomplete edition of which runs to a further million and a quarter words or so.

* * * * *

Rochester. When Mr. Pickwick surveyed the beauties of that city from the old bridge over the Medway, it is said that the revolving sails of no less than nineteen windmills could be seen from that vantage point. To-day but one solitary mill is to be seen, although not from the modern bridge. Now the sails of that, too, have ceased to revolve. It is the Delce Mill, built in 1853, and rebuilt after a fire in 1872. Recently changing hands, it will probably end its days as a storehouse.

* * * * *

Cloisterham. The towns of Rochester, Chatham and Gillingham are reported to contemplate amalgamation and a composite name is sought. Correspondents in the local press have not been slow to suggest the commemoration of Dickens's association with the towns in the new title. One suggests *Edwinston*, while another writes "Why not *Cloisterham*?" The same suggestion has appeared in "The Times."

LESLIE C. STAPLES.

THE HAUNTED MAN

(A New Version)

By J. H McNULTY

IT was raining in torrents, streams were pouring down the roads, gurgling as they rushed down the gulleys, the rain was battering at the windows, flung against them by the boisterous gusts of an easterly gale, and tall trees were waving and bending like willow-wands before the fierce onset of the storm.

It was the sort of day to sit by the fire with a book, hoping to forget among the pleasant fancies of fiction the gloomy realities of fact. Clouds were flying across the grey sky, whipped and torn by the gale, and anyone who could stay at home had reason to be thankful, but it was not gratitude that William Walder felt as he sat in his study resting in an easy chair before the fire. He had flung aside the morning paper with the words, "There's nothing in it," a remark one often hears, though it rarely prevents the purchase of the next edition.

"Here I am," he muttered to himself, "cooped up in the house with this rotten foot and with nothing to read."

The first part of his remarks was explained by his bandaged foot, the result of a fall on the slippery pavement a few days earlier, the fall causing a sprained ankle. But the words "Nothing to read" did require some explanation for the walls of the room were covered with books of all sorts and sizes. The truth was he had read them all, all once, several twice, and some many times. The Library contained the works of most of the poets and the greater novelists, as well as books of Essays, Criticism, History, and Philosophy, and so on. They had been bought for use, not for ornament, and they had been well used. They had been collected on no particular plan and were a miscellaneous lot, though all were worth reading. Walder knew, of course, that he could get a book from the local library, but he also knew that any volume he asked for would almost certainly be out, and any substitute sent would probably be unreadable. Besides, he could not send anyone out in this weather. The Christmas holidays were approaching and there would not be much time for reading during the festivities of the next few days, but after that the prospect of being confined to the house for weeks in bookless idleness was horrible, and it might well be many weeks before he could visit his library in London. But he wanted something to read now, and hobbling across the room he sat down by the shelves, picking up one book after another, glancing at it and returning it to its place.

Having listlessly scanned through one shelf, he came to the novelists. He picked up the Christmas Books, glanced at the titles of the stories, and then, pausing at *The Haunted Man*, made the rather debatable remark: "It is the worst thing Dickens ever wrote. How could the man who wrote the novels ever write such a story? Redlaw was an idiot, he had the gift of forgetfulness and gave it up. I wish I could forget all I've ever read and have again the joy of reading as new all the great books of old—never a dull moment then——"

"Your wish is granted," said a voice.

"I beg your pardon," said Walder, "I thought I was alone; I didn't hear you announced."

"It's all right," answered the gentleman in a kindly voice, "I was not announced. You think Redlaw was foolish to give up his gift of forgetfulness. It is yours now; see if it brings you greater happiness.

I will return in a year's time and then you can keep or relinquish the gift, as you please."

"Who are you?" asked Walder.

"The writer of the book you are holding in your hand, the subject of your recent criticism. I have returned to defend my book as well as to grant your wish."

It was growing very dark, the rain had turned to snow, and driven by the wind, was covering the windows with a thick, white curtain; objects were not at all clear in this mid-day twilight, and Walder turned to switch on the light, but as he did so his visitor vanished, and the chair where he had been sitting a moment before was vacant.

"Have I been dreaming?" he cried, "seeing visions in this half-light? Yet it all fitted in exactly with what I had been thinking."

The luncheon bell rang, and he made his slow and painful way to the dining room. He thought little of his adventure during the meal, regarding the affair as a trick of imagination, a waking dream, the silly fancy of a disgruntled reader cheated of his mental diet, but on his return to the Library the thought of it came back and would not be dismissed. He felt a great wish to see if there was any truth in what he had experienced, and yet a strange reluctance to give it so much credence as to put it to the test. It was, of course, a mere hallucination, but what a joy if it were true; to have all English Literature open to him, to read all these books with the freshness of novelty, not with the gluttonous appetite of youth, but with the refined palate of mature years, noting and enjoying each beauty of thought and diction.

Where should he begin? He looked at the volumes of Poetry filling several shelves, and chose Shakespeare. Before opening the book he tried to remember the names and subjects of the Plays. His mind was a blank, he remembered nothing. It was true then—now for the gate to fairyland.

He opened the book, glanced at the index, and the wintry weather and falling snow prompted the choice of "Winter's Tale"; it was just the thing for a day like this.

He began to read, but after a short time put the book down with the remark: "Leontes' jealousy was insane. What was the matter with Shakespeare when he wrote such sorry stuff?" However, he persevered, and read the Play through. He thought the later scenes pleasant and the plot good. Looking at the notes he discovered that the plot was borrowed from Greene's Pandosto, so not much of value was left for Shakespeare, except the Flower passages; they were charming.

After the holidays he started on the Tragedies and began with "Hamlet." His reactions to the famous tragedy were curious but not unreasonable. The conversation of the grave-diggers before the burial of Ophelia struck him as out of place in a serious play, and Hamlet's action at the graveside that of a lunatic. Hamlet might say "he was putting an antic disposition on," but this was real madness. What was the sense of talking about drinking up Esil or eating a crocodile to prove his love. It only showed he was mad.

He even found much to criticise in Hamlet's farewell to Horatio. "Does a dying man ever ask his friend not to go into company, or enjoy himself, in order to mourn for his death?" The much praised line, "Absent thee from felicity awhile," was false. It was unnatural in sentiment and fantastic in expression.

Then he turned to "King Lear" and here he thought the author himself showed signs of madness. "Macbeth" pleased him better, but he had had more than enough of the Tragedies by now. Was it

really necessary, or artistic, or even decent to pile the stage with corpses, or turn the theatre into a slaughter-house ?

He found passages of great beauty in the Comedies, especially in the "Merchant of Venice," but here he thought they were overshadowed by the absurdity of the plot. Spenser came next and he read through "The Fairie Queene," and was glad it was not longer.

He enjoyed Milton greatly, but when he turned to the prose works he felt a pang of regret that the poet had wasted so much time in writing Religious and Political controversy. He would willingly have exchanged all the prose for one more poem, or a single great sonnet.

Then turning to the moderns he began with Wordsworth. He read steadily through the complete poems, changing his opinion with almost every page ; now considering him as one of the greatest poets, and then thinking him a tedious, prosy old bore. If a friend could have persuaded the great Lakist to burn three-quarters of what he had written, the remainder would have been a sheer delight and the poet's reputation much higher. Many other poets he read with greater or less enjoyment. but always with some slight disappointment.

It was now that he felt the need of something more solid, so leaving fancy he turned to fact and read history, but the contradictions of historians left him in doubt whether History really did adhere more closely to fact than Poetry.

Winter had now passed away. The sprained ankle was mended and walking in the country divided his time with reading. It was that period of the year when the trees are almost luminous, the leaves translucent, half light, half colour. After a day spent in the heart of the country he returned one evening and felt the need of a book which would harmonise with the sights and sounds of a perfect spring day, something with " a green thought in a green shade " in it. Looking along the shelves a little book caught his eye ; it bore the delightful title, " Frondes Agrestes "—projecting branches. What could be better ?

It turned out to be something very different from what he expected, but he thoroughly enjoyed it. All these chosen extracts were delightful, but he thought Ruskin's notes rather silly. Naturally the book led him to Modern Painters. the mine from which these nuggets of pure gold had been extracted.

He began the great work, but had not gone far before he came to a passage on what Ruskin called " The Lower Dutch Schools " ; after reading some comments, part praise, part criticism, he came to the sentence: " I conceive the best patronage that any monarch could possibly bestow upon the arts, would be to collect the whole body of them into one gallery and burn it to the ground." This disgusted him, for he loved Dutch pictures and had copies of many of them on the walls. " And they called Ruskin an art critic," he cried, " whatever he was, he was not that." When he had recovered from his irritation he continued his reading and eventually read the whole six volumes of Modern Painters ; but he found that the best parts were in Frondes, and if a few, a very few more passages, had been included in the little book, the longer work might be left unread. As he had enjoyed " Frondes Agrestes," he now chose Ruskin's other books with Latin names, " Munera Pulveris " and " Fors Clavigera." The latter pleased and irritated by turns ; the amazing mixture of absurdity and wisdom, of fancy and humour had, at least, the saving grace of intense earnestness.

Before leaving Ruskin he read " The Crown of Wild Olive," but found little enjoyment in it. The praise of war, though carefully qualified, disgusted him, and the comparison of Marathon with Gettysburg, to prove that modern warfare was more deadly than ancient, was

absurd. Whether it was true or not, Marathon proved nothing for it was an exception to pretty well every battle.

Ruskin sent him to Carlyle, and here more disappointment awaited him. Like nearly every reader he began with "Heroes and Hero-worship." With one or two exceptions he didn't think much of the heroes, an opinion which was strengthened by reading the larger books on Cromwell and Frederick the Great. "If this is Carlyle's idea of a hero, it's not mine," was his comment. "Let me see his idea of a villain." To discover this he turned to "The French Revolution," and much to his surprise was delighted with it. Not that Carlyle whitewashed the criminals in that fearful drama, but the vividness of the writing was magnificent. It was terrible but splendid. It was like seeing the Revolution by flashes of lightning. "Sartor Resartus" renewed his disappointment; there were some fine passages, but it was far too German for his taste.

During the summer months he travelled abroad and at home, and it was not till the autumn that he began again to read seriously. He also considered the position in which he found himself. In some curious way his wish had been granted, but it had not been the success he had hoped for. From being a fairly well-read man, he had become almost an ignoramus.

His conversation had grown prosaic and commonplace. Politics, the weather, gossip; literature was an impossible subject. He knew nothing of modern books, as all his spare time was taken up in gaining some knowledge of the great books of the past and even now he had read only a few of them.

Turning to some of the greater novelists, he read Scott and found a certain amount of pleasure in the Waverley Novels, but he wished it were possible to omit the padding. When you know the story, judicious skipping may be a help, but this is dangerous when you are reading a book for the first time, and practically he was doing that.

Up till now he had avoided reading Dickens, but the year was drawing rapidly to a close, and if his dream, phantasy, or whatever it was, were to be repeated, he would have the choice of retaining or relinquishing his gift, and he must read Dickens before that occurred. He determined to proceed with prudence for his adventure had taught him caution. He felt sure that once he had enjoyed the books in his library much more than he was doing now. This was proved by his wish for Forgetfulness, by which he had hoped to renew the joyful reading of earlier years. He would first read a Life and criticism of the great novelist, and would thus find out which were his greatest books, and reserve some of them to a time when he was in a more appreciative state of mind. He discovered that *A Christmas Carol* was by common consent the best of the Short Stories; he would reserve that. *Pickwick Papers* also, and, perhaps, some others, but he was not sure about that. He would at least keep the two books till he regained his memory.

He began with the Christmas Books and Christmas Stories, and noted how closely his experience matched that of *The Haunted Man*. Redlaw had asked for Forgetfulness of a great wrong, and the gift proved a curse. He, too, had asked for Forgetfulness, and it had brought him little but disappointment. He also was haunted, haunted by an indefinite feeling of malaise, of something just beyond his grasp. He could give it no name; it was intangible and vague, yet it recurred over and over again. Redlaw had relinquished his gift, and if he had the opportunity he would do the same.

Most of the Short Stories he found disappointing; a few he liked but only in a half-hearted fashion. He did not know that Dickens was rarely at his best in this kind of writing. Then he started on the

novels. *Oliver Twist* failed to please him, though it seemed good in parts. *Nicholas Nickleby* was much better, though it had many weak passages. He liked *Barnaby Rudge*, but wondered why Dickens chose an idiot for his hero. He thought that any book in which Lord George Gordon appeared had enough madness in it without any further addition. *The Old Curiosity Shop* was far too sentimental for his taste When he came to the greater novels of Dickens's middle years he noticed a great improvement, though even here the voice of criticism was never silent. *Martin Chuzzlewit* was delightful, but he objected to the American episode which, though amusing, was, he thought, out of place, in bad taste, and spoilt the unity of an otherwise excellent book. *David Copperfield* pleased him greatly, but Mr. Dick was only a further proof of the author's love of idiots, a weakness, he had to admit, Dickens shares with Shakespeare, and he could not bring himself to believe that the gentle, affable, guileless Micawber could ever have unmasked Heep's villainy, or have become a successful magistrate at Port Middle Bay. Such episodes were fit for a fairy tale, not for a serious novel. He had only a qualified admiration for *Dombey and Son*, for he considered Carker Senior impossible and Toots unnecessarily silly. Mr. Dombey neglected his business and deserved the ruin that overtook him. If he really wished his son to succeed him, as he certainly did, the neglect was unnatural as well as foolish. *Bleak House*, too, received some severe criticism. The twofold method of narration was a great mistake, a very clumsy way of telling the story, which could easily have been avoided. Inspector Buckett was a failure and many of the other characters grotesque in the extreme. In spite of these criticisms he found much pleasure in the book and in several of the other novels, but it was always mixed with disappointment. There was always some spot on the sun of complete enjoyment. Indeed, it was not till *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* was reached that the voice of criticism was silent for here all his attention was taken up in trying to solve the mystery.

And now the year was drawing to a close and to-night he might expect a repetition of his strange experience of a year ago.

So long as he regained his memory he cared little how it returned. Throughout the day the thought of what might happen filled his mind. He took a long walk through the snow-clad fields, but the thought never left him. Would his Christmas gift be the restoration of his lost memory ? he wondered.

After an excellent dinner, a prelude to to-morrow's feast, he sat before the fire and waited.

Suddenly the silence was broken by a voice asking him: " Have you enjoyed your gift ? Will you keep it or return it ? "

" I wish to get rid of it at any cost," he cried, and looking round he saw the same figure, sitting in the same chair as a year ago.

" I feared it might prove a disappointment," said his visitor. " What happened ? "

" I found," said Walder, " that I criticised everything I read. I feel sure it used not to be so, at least not to the same extent. Why should it be so now ? "

" Perhaps," said Dickens, " you had grown used to the weak passages in the books. We all have our faults, you know, but you had grown up with them. Familiarity had robbed them of offence. You first came to these books with plenty of youthful enthusiasm and little critical faculty. Now the position is reversed."

" Yes, I think that must be the reason," he replied, " but there was something else, a vague, indefinite feeling which haunted me, the thought of some happiness from which I was shut out. It often came to me when reading other authors, but it was most persistent in reading

your books. I cannot describe it more clearly than that. What could it be ? "

"It was," said Dickens, "the ghost of dead memories. These books were filled with parts of your past life. Re-reading them brought back the scenes in which you first read them, the friends who were with you then and are with you no more. Books are repositories of happy memories. All this you had lost."

"Yes, it must be so," he cried, "but I did enjoy several of your books."

"What about the Christmas books ? " asked his visitor.

"Not so much as the novels, though I read them all but one."

"I often felt cramped when writing them," said Dickens, "yet I enjoyed doing it. But why did you omit one of them ? "

"I was convinced I loved it once and feared that if I re-read it in my peculiar state of mind I should be disappointed and lose the delight I once had in it."

"And which one was it ? " persisted Dickens.

Distant singing interrupted the conversation and the words, "God rest ye merry, Gentlemen," were heard coming from voices outside.

"Yes, I thought it was that. Go and reward the Carol singers ; don't be a Scrooge."

Walder rose to carry out the request, and as he rose the figure disappeared, but the singing continued.

He was puzzled, but he carried out his pleasant duty and returned to the room, and then . . . there was no need to hesitate any longer. There was one book that he must read to-night, and he read it with renewed but not with new pleasure.

"Marley was dead," but memory was alive and the Past met and helped the Present and even the despised Haunted Man took on a new meaning and became for him a true story.

BLEWBURY JONES

"WHICH of 'em have you got in that lot ? " asked Mr. Boffin,* handing Wegg Merryweather's 'Lives and Anecdotes of Misers' and some other similar books.

"Well, sir," replied Silas, "I should say they must be pretty well all here, sir ; here's a large assortment, sir ; my eye catches John Overs, sir, John Little, sir, Dick Jarrel, John Elwes, the Reverend Mr. Jones of Blewbury, Daniel Dancer——"

By the Berkshire Downs, between Baldon Hill and the Danish encampment of Blewburton Hill lies the village of Blewbury, where the Rev. Morgan Jones was curate-in-charge from 1782 to 1824, and stories and tales about his eccentric and miserly behaviour are still remembered in the village. It is said that he wore the same coat for 42 years, and this antiquated garment is stated by a writer in a local newspaper to be still preserved by a resident in the village. He also had a hat which he had taken from a scarecrow, but this has long been lost.

He lived on half-a-crown a week, spent on bread and bacon which he considered to be "necessities," and on tea, a "luxury." For the bacon he used to make three calls : the first to order it, the second to fetch it, the third to pay for it. Each visit was made at meal time and he stayed and ate his fill, being as was said at the time, "fond of gratuitous good cheer."

In spite of his miserliness, he was well liked in the village and appears to have been a good clergyman. He made occasional donations to missionary societies, and at his death left no less than £1,800, which was inherited by a distant relative.

L. B. F.

* *Our Mutual Friend.* Bk. III, Chap. 6.

THE TRIAL OF GEORGE GORDON

By FRANK A. GIBSON

I

AS recorded in the last chapter of *Barnaby Rudge*, Lord George Gordon was taken from the Tower of London on Monday, February 5th, 1781, "and solemnly tried at Westminster for High Treason. Of this crime he was, after a patient investigation, declared Not Guilty; upon the ground that there was no proof of his having called the multitude together with any traitorous or unlawful intentions." The "ground" was, of course, Dickens's own version of the jury's reasons, but it was, as will be seen, quite fairly implicit. Yet Gordon's head had been called for in no uncertain terms by the Crown. In his opening speech for the Prosecution the Attorney General stated: "Gentlemen, you have now before you, as will appear upon the evidence, the author of all these violent and disgraceful proceedings, to whom the whole is to be imputed; an offender of such a description has not often appeared in a court of justice." And Dickens made the Law Officer's phrase his own when he described Gordon in his Tower cell as "the unhappy author of all."

Gordon's trial was in some ways as unique as the riots themselves, and it is fortunate indeed that it was reported verbatim by Joseph Gurney, the son of Thomas Gurney, the inventor of the successful system of shorthand later to be mastered by Dickens himself. The father was succeeded by the son as official shorthand writer to the Courts of Justice in 1770. Gurney's report was published by G. Kearsley and M. Gurney in 1781 and went into several editions. It is hoped that the following necessarily brief and discursive extracts may be of interest to those Dickensians who have not hitherto seen Gurney's text.*

An extraordinary feature of the Gordon trial was its duration. It might be supposed from a remark made during the hearing that there was an instruction or desire to get it over quickly. At any rate the trial was all over in one hearing—but what a hearing! Gurney tells us that "the Court sat at Eight o'clock on the Monday Morning; and at Three Quarters after Four on the Tuesday morning the jury withdrew." They returned into court with their verdict at "a Quarter after Five o'Clock," the trial having thus lasted uninterruptedly for over 21 hours. The prisoner was not examined, and from first to last is not reported as having uttered a single word during the trial.†

The remark referred to was made by the Judge after an objection by defending counsel to a question put by the Attorney General when examining Thomas Gates, the City Marshal. Supporting the Crown Officer, the Judge said that if he gave evidence of an overt act in one county he could "to be sure" give evidence of an overt act in another county; "and you have already done so, for you began with an overt act in the county of Surry" (*sic*). "But," the Judge added, "*we cannot adjourn in this case at all*"; and he wondered the Attorney General did not "confine his examination," etc.

A slight expression of impatience also fell from the Judge while Lord Porchester was being asked by the Attorney General whether

* The trial was also reported by William Blanchard, whose shorthand note was "revised by the several counsel concerned" and sold at 4 Dean Street, Fetter Lane. A third report was "published under the Inspection of his Lordship's Friends" by J. Mennons & Co., of Edinburgh.

† Robert Watson (the original of Gashford) has, however, left an account stating that Gordon "with a pleasant smile" challenged one of the panel of jurors, a ropemaker, because he was "interested by profession." The panel, according to Gurney, included one Arthur Shakespear of Church Street, Stepney, Esq. "and ropemaker."

he had observed the prisoner wearing a blue cockade. The witness—evidently a forerunner of Mr. Winkle—replied: "I did not see the prisoner that day but in the House of Commons. I shall wish, if I may be permitted, to ask of the Court—." Whereupon "the Court" interrupted with: "It is not worth while to lose a minute about it, for several of the witnesses have said they saw him with a blue cockade." When, however, one of the jury persisted by asking whether Gordon had worn a blue cockade on Tuesday the 6th (the fifth day of the riots), the Judge took up his question with: "No matter where; did you see him with a blue cockade on the Tuesday?" And Porchester then replied: "I certainly did, in the House."

Like the riots, the trial began with a petition. "Lord George Gordon," Gurney writes, "was apprehended on the 9th of June upon a warrant for High Treason and was committed a close prisoner to the Tower. On the first day of Michaelmas term his Lordship applied to the Court of King's Bench by petition, founded upon the Habeas Corpus Act, to be either tried or set at liberty. A few days later in the same term an indictment was presented to the Grand Jury for the County of Middlesex, who returned it into the Court of King's Bench *a true Bill*."

II

At his trial on February 5th, 1781, the prisoner was represented by Mr. Kenyon and Mr. Erskine, and the Crown by Mr. James Wallace, the Attorney General, Sir James Mansfield, the Solicitor General, and five junior counsel. The presiding Judge was Lord Mansfield, who had for 25 years been Lord Chief Justice. The other Judges were Mr. Edward Willes, Sir W. Ashurst, and Sir F. Buller. The indictment was summarised by Norton as follows: "May it please your Lordship, and you, gentlemen of the Jury, the noble prisoner at the bar, George Gordon, Esq., commonly called Lord George Gordon,* stands indicted of High Treason, in intending to levy war against his present Majesty, within the Kingdom of Great Britain; and Gentlemen, the indictment further states that the prisoner, to effect this traitorous intention, did on the 2nd of June last and at divers other times between that day and the 10th of the same month, at the Parish of St. Margaret's within the liberty of Westminster in this county, with a great multitude of persons, armed and arrayed in a warlike manner, with weapons offensive and defensive and with colours flying; being then and there unlawfully and traitorously assembled, most wickedly, maliciously and traitorously prepare and levy public war against our Sovereign Lord the King, contrary to the duty of his allegiance against the peace of our said Lord the King, his crown and dignity, and against the Statute in such case made and provided."

Norton was followed by the Attorney General, who explained that the offence of levying war against the King within the Statute of the 25th of Edward the Third was of two sorts, the one directly and immediately against the person of the King, and the other, called constructive levying of war, against the Majesty of the King—as a great and numerous insurrection of the people to effect by force an alteration of the established law of the country, the redress of national grievances, or the reformation of evils, real or imaginary, in which the insurgents have no particular or special interest. It was of the latter kind of levying war that the prisoner at the bar stood accused.

The Attorney General then referred to the Act of Catholic Relief against which the petition of the Protestant Association was directed.

* Gordon was the third son of Cosmo George, third Duke of Gordon, and as the younger son of a Duke bore the Courtesy title of Lord George Gordon.

Its particular object had been to repeal an act of Parliament of the 11th and 12th years of the reign of William III, under which every Popish priest exercising any part of his function in this kingdom was made liable to perpetual imprisonment; every Catholic keeping a school or educating youth was liable to the same punishment; Roman Catholics were made incapable of inheriting or taking by devise or limitation any estates from parents or others, unless they should take oaths and subscribe a declaration which by their religion they could not conscientiously do, and such estates were to go immediately over to their next of kin being Protestants. Another provision made Catholics incapable of taking an estate by purchase.

The history of the times, the Attorney General said, showed neither necessity nor apology for the harshness of these provisions. The Bill was brought into the House of Commons so that the Court party might reject it and so draw upon themselves the odium of a step in favour of the Catholics. It was not meant to pass. The opposition were, however, disappointed, for the Court party did not reject the measure. The sponsors of the Bill then wished to drop it but they could not; they therefore added even harsher and more unreasonable clauses to the Bill and sent it up to the House of Lords in the hope that that House would reject it. "In this," said the Attorney General, "they were also disappointed, for the House of Lords suffered it to pass, with the severe penalties and punishments I have stated."

This exposition by the Attorney General was really immaterial, because, as Lord Mansfield made clear in his summing up, the charge was of levying war independently of particular motive. We may be grateful, however, for the light thrown on the mentality of at least some of Gordon's followers.

The Bill of Relief had been brought in, in 1778, by Sir George Savile, "a member of the House of Commons distinguished for his love of the civil rights of mankind and for his firm and zealous attachment to the Protestant religion."

The Attorney General went on to deal with a matter extremely relevant to the case. In the winter following Savile's Bill it was supposed that a Bill would be brought into Parliament to remove some penalties inflicted by the laws of Scotland on the Roman Catholics of that country. And in the beginning of February accounts were received from Edinburgh of a most violent insurrection to put a stop to that measure. In England an Association, called the Protestant Association, had been formed, and on June 2nd a multitude of people, or more properly a very large army, was collected together in St. George's Fields under the pretext of presenting a petition to Parliament.

III

The prisoner had become President of this Association, many of whose members were no doubt willing to present the Association's petition for repeal of the Savile Act in a constitutional way. But their President called a general meeting which anyone was at liberty to attend, and obtained approval for his motion that he should not present the petition unless he was accompanied by at least 20,000 people. These people were to be distinguished by cockades, so that he might know the friends to the petition and the Protestant cause. "Good God!" exclaimed the Attorney General with generous indignation, "is a cockade a test of adherence to any good cause? Every man that came with a cockade in his hat was to be considered a friend to the Protestant religion! There was no other title to admission into this body." The assembly of such a multitude might have caused anyone concern, but the prisoner had thought of that; he bade them recollect what the Scotch had done. Their "firmness"

NO POPERY or NEWGATE REFORMER.

The' He Pays he's a Protestant look at the Print
The Face and the Ribbon will give you a hint:
Religion he owes in hopes to deceive
While his practice is only to burn and to thieve

Caricature by James Gillray

Published during the Gordon Riots

From the Collection of Mr. Frank A. Gibson

had prevented the Bill from being extended to them. "He recommended to this body, to 20,000 men, the firm conduct of the Scotch, which consisted in the most violent insurrection and tumult ever known in Edinburgh. . . . Is a mob not able to take a hint? It would have been too much for the prisoner to say: 'Gentlemen, go and pull down all the houses of the Roman Catholics'; but it was 'Recollect what the Scotch did by their firm conduct'! And he added that he did not desire them to run into any danger he was not ready to share with them; he was 'ready to go to the gallows for their cause.'"

The resolution of the Protestant Association ran: "Whereas no hall in London can contain 40,000 men, resolved that this Association do meet on Friday next, June 2nd, in St. George's Fields, at ten o'clock in the morning, to consider of the most prudent and respectful manner of attending their petition, which will be presented the same day to the House of Commons." They were to meet—40,000 people; how were they to be consulted; how was their opinion to be asked? The resolution also said that the magistrates of London, Westminster and Southwark should be requested to attend, "so that their presence may overawe and control any riotous or evil-minded persons." This the Attorney General described as an insult; how were the magistrates to protect 40,000 men? In any case, the magistrates named could not act outside the borough of Southwark, where these people were. The London and Westminster magistrates could not act in Southwark, and in Southwark he believed hardly one magistrate resided.

IV

The evidence of the witnesses for the Crown occupies 24 of the 100 pages of Gurney's report, and the evidence for the Defence 30 pages, both including cross-examination. It is impossible not to admire the conscientious character of the report; the oddities of the witnesses and the keen thrust and parry of cross-examination are reproduced exactly. The Crown's chief witness, William Hay, was attacked in lively fashion by Mr. Kenyon, who elicited the fact that he was a bankrupt printer with Catholic friends and a curious *penchant* for making notes of all the Protestant Association's proceedings. The suggestion was made later that he was little better than a Catholic spy, if not an actual *provocateur*. But the confusion into which Hay was eventually brought might be regarded as a sign of over-confidence in the truth of his own testimony. One of the principal rioters was apparently a brewer's man known to Hay, though Hay did not wish to admit his acquaintance with him. Incautiously he said that the man looked like a brewer's servant in his best clothes. Promptly he was asked how he knew a brewer's servant in his best clothes from another man, and Hay was forced into the position of maintaining there was a difference without being able to say what it was.* Defending counsel immediately afterwards tried to repeat this success by asking Hay how he knew that another man who carried a banner in the riots was a constable, but this time the witness was ready, and replied: "The man was very remarkable; his name is Payne, he is a City constable."

Though Hay was the Crown's first witness, by far the most interesting evidence for the Crown was given by the Rev. Thomas Bowen, the officiating chaplain at the House of Commons on the Friday when Gordon led the mob to Westminster. He described the scene in the lobby of the House, and how Gordon repeatedly addressed the noisy

* This was no mere bickering but involved a point of some importance, it being the aim of the Prosecution to show that certain of the rioters were prominent among the crowd of "petitioners" at Westminster as well as at all the chief centres of riot—*cf.* "This man was Hugh; and in every part of the riot he was seen."

and evil-smelling crowd from the lobby gallery. Bowen saw a gentleman who seemed to be persuading Gordon to return to his seat.

Q. "You say seemed to persuade?"

A. "I judged so from the manner of it. As soon as Lord George turned round and saw who it was he called out to the people, 'This is Sir Michael le Fleming; he has just been speaking for you.' His lordship seemed to me remarkably pleased with Sir Michael. He patted or stroked his shoulder and expressed a kind of joy in his countenance which I hardly know how to describe; it seemed to me extravagant and, if I may use the expression, childish . . . . Some time after this I went up into the eating room. While I was sitting at table Lord George Gordon came into the room. His lordship had thrown himself into a chair near me and seemed overcome with heat and fatigue. I thought the opportunity so favourable that I could not help telling his lordship what I had just heard from the lobby. I told him that a person there had said that if his lordship would come and say that it was necessary for them to go they would go; and I added as my opinion that it depended wholly upon his lordship to disperse them. His lordship made no reply and soon afterwards left the room. Some time after this I went downstairs, and, seeing his lordship go towards the little gallery to address the people I hastened to get near him. His lordship, I think, began by advising them in general terms to be quiet and peaceable and steady. 'His Majesty,' said his lordship, "is a gracious monarch, and when he hears that the people ten miles round are collecting there is no doubt but that he will send his ministers private orders to repeal the Bill . . . The Scotch had no redress till they pulled down the "mass houses"; Lord Weymouth sent official assurances that the Act would not be extended to them; and why should they be better off than you?' His lordship then again advised them to be quiet and peaceable. When his lordship had finished he asked me if I would speak to the people. I said by no means, that his lordship was the only person who could speak to them with any good effect. His lordship then took hold of my gown and presenting me to the people, called out: 'This is the clergyman of the House of Commons. I desire you will ask him what his opinion of the Popish Bill is,' and immediately urged me to give it. I replied to his lordship with considerable warmth that the only opinion I should give was that all the consequences which might arise from that night would be entirely owing to his lordship. Several gentlemen that were about us repeated my words. His lordship made no reply and I went into the House."

Bowen was asked whether he heard any general cry by the people in the lobby, and replied that they often called out "Lord George Gordon!" and "Repeal, repeal, repeal!"

Sir John Chester, with his cockade, is recalled by the following passage in Bowen's cross-examination by Kenyon:

Q. "You saw several members with blue cockades?"

A. "I believe there were two. I saw one take out the cockade as soon as he came into the House and put it into his pocket."

Bowen could not say who that member was.

There is a glimpse of Maypole Hugh in the evidence, though his name is James Jackson and a footnote records that he was tried at the Old Bailey in June session for being concerned in the demolition of Mr. Akerman's house and convicted and executed. One of the witnesses, asked whether he knew any of the persons who carried flags, replied: "Yes, one, James Jackson, a very desperate young fellow." As soon as Justice Hyde (one of the Westminster magistrates) had ordered the horse (guards) to ride among the mob to disperse them in Palace Yard (this was on Tuesday), Jackson hoisted the flag

and said "To Hyde's house a-hoy!" Jackson carried a black and red flag. After Mr. Hyde's property had been thrown into the street and burnt James Jackson waved his flag, walked backwards and forwards in St. Martin's Street, and then cried out: "A-hoy for Newgate!" The attack on Newgate followed.

Hyde stated in evidence that his house in St. Martin's Street was pulled down on Tuesday, and his house at Islington on the following day.

One witness produced the original "protection" handed by Sim Tappertit to Gabriel Varden. It ran, the report says, "literally as followeth":

> "*All true friends to Protestants I hope will* [be] *particular and do no injury to the property of any true Protestant, as I am well assured the proprietor of this house is a staunch and worthy friend to the cause.—G. Gordon.*"

The witness said he had been informed that a house of his, occupied by Catholics, was on the list of those to be pulled down, and he had therefore obtained the protection in the above form. In cross-examination it appeared that the witness had handed the protection ready written to Gordon, and he could not positively say that the latter had read it before signing. The value to the defence of this candid admission was, however, destroyed when the defence's last witness, Alderman Pugh, stated that while he was seated with Lord George in a coach "a young man came with half a sheet of paper that was written upon; he seemed to be in great agony; he desired the prisoner to set his name to it; he said his house or houses were in danger of being destroyed, and he wished his lordship would sign the paper." Lord George was thus inadvertently shown to have been aware of the document's import.

Even more damaging to the prisoner was the evidence of another of his own witnesses, Viscount Stormont, one of the three principal Secretaries of State, who was called to prove a visit to the Queen's House (Buckingham Palace) of Lord George Gordon on Wednesday, June 7th, the sixth day of the riots and the eve of their collapse. Gordon told him he wished to see the King because he (Gordon) could be of essential or material service in suppressing the riots. Stormont took this message to the King, who sent back the answer: "It is impossible for the King to see Lord George until he has given sufficient proof of his allegiance and loyalty by employing those means which he says he has in his power to quell the disturbances and restore peace to the capital." Gordon returned the discreet answer that his best endeavours would be used. This evidence was clearly considered good enough by the prosecution, which did not offer to cross-examine. (The object of calling this witness, the defence said, was to show that Gordon was "filled with consternation at the riots.") Gordon's visit was miserably late, because the riots were checked on the morrow, largely owing to the King's initiative.

V

As already mentioned, the presiding Judge at the trial was Lord Mansfield, the veteran Chief Justice, whose cruel losses at the hands of the rioters are described in *Barnaby Rudge*. There were two references to them in the proceedings, one, appropriately, by each side. In his lengthy and at times impassioned appeal for the prisoner, Erskine exclaimed: "Can any man living for instance believe that Lord George Gordon could possibly have incited the mob to destroy the house of that great and venerable magistrate who has presided so long in this high tribunal that the oldest of us do not remember him in any

other form than the aweful form and figure of Justice—a magistrate who has always been the friend of the Protestant dissenters against the ill-timed jealousies of establishment—his countryman too—and without adverting to the partiality not unjustly imputed to men of that country, a man of whom any country might be proud? No, gentlemen, it is not credible that any man of noble birth and liberal education (unless agitated by the most implacable personal resentment) could possibly consent to the burning of the house of Lord Mansfield." And in the closing speech for the Crown the Solicitor General rebutted this ingenuous rhetoric by saying: "The presence of the person before whom I speak would make it very improper and indecent of me to enlarge upon that particular circumstance in this cause." But, he continued, the circumstance was not the exception claimed by the defence. "In the one general desire to force a repeal of the Bill resentment was directed uniformly against those persons who are what they call in friendship with Papists and what other people call friendship to toleration. They knew the noble person to whom that circumstance alluded had always distinguished himself as the most effectual friend this country ever knew to the most universal and liberal toleration. There was no man in the kingdom at whom their resentment would be more naturally pointed."

Lord Mansfield's summing-up makes the shortest section in the report, occupying as it does only two of its pages. His summary of the evidence verbatim is, however, for obvious reasons, omitted from Gurney's report. Particular interest attaches to his remarks in view of his peculiar position as one of the chief sufferers from the riots. No hint escaped him of his grievous loss in the destruction of his house and library. There were, he said, two kinds of levying war: one against the person of the King, to imprison, to dethrone, or to kill him, to make him change measures or remove counsellors; the other was said to be levied against the majesty of the King, or, in other words, against him in regal capacity, as when a multitude rise and assemble to attain by force and violence any object of a general public nature; that was levying war against the majesty of the King, "and most reasonably so held, because it tends to dissolve all the bonds of society, to destroy property, to overturn Government, and by force of arms to restrain the King from reigning according to law. Insurrections by force and violence to raise the price of wages, to open all prisons, to destroy meeting-houses, nay to destroy all brothels, to resist the execution of militia laws, to throw down all enclosures, to alter the established law or religion, to redress grievances real or pretended, had all been held levying war. "Lord Chief Justice Holt in Sir John Friend's case had said: 'If persons do assemble themselves and act with force in opposition to some law which they think inconvenient, and hope thereby to get it repealed, this is levying war and treason.' In the case before them it did not rest on an implication that it was hoped by opposition to a law to get it repealed, but the prosecution rested upon the direct ground that the object was by force and violence to compel the legislature to repeal a law. "And therefore I tell you the joint opinion of us all that if this multitude assembled with intent by acts of force and violence to compel the legislature to repeal a law it is High Treason."

Though the form of indictment for this species of treason mentioned drums, trumpets, arms, swords, fifes and guns, yet none of these circumstances was essential. The question always was whether the intent was by force and violence to attain an object of a general and public nature by any instruments or by dint of their numbers. Whoever incited, advised, encouraged, or in any way aided a multitude assembled with such intent, though he did not personally appear among

them or with his own hands commit any violence whatsoever, yet he was equally a principal with those who acted, and was guilty of high treason.

Lord Mansfield then told the Jury they could dismiss from consideration a matter upon which they had heard a great deal at the bar. Whether the Act called Sir George Savile's was wise and expedient—whether its repeal would have been right or wrong—had nothing to do with that trial. Grievances might be real or pretended, laws good or bad—it was equally high treason by the strong hand of a multitude to force a repeal or redress.

But the venerable Judge could not refrain from expressing his opinion about the Bill, which, he said, it was most injurious to call a toleration of Popery. It was a complete misrepresentation to infer that Papists were tolerated by Sir George Savile's Bill. "It was," said Lord Mansfield, using words singularly appropriate 150 years later, "*a cry to raise the blind spirit of fanaticism or enthusiasm in the minds of a deluded multitude, which in the history of the world has been the cause of much ruin and national destruction.*"

A doubt had been faintly thrown out at the bar whether it was lawful to attend a petition to the House of Commons with more than ten persons. He told them it was not.

The jury had to consider two points. First, whether this multitude assembled and committed acts of violence with intent to terrify and compel the legislature to repeal the Act called Sir George Savile's. If upon this point their opinion was in the negative, that made an end of the whole and the prisoner ought to be acquitted; but if their opinion was that the intent of this multitude and of the violence they committed was to force a repeal, there arose a second point: whether the prisoner at the bar incited, encouraged, promoted, or assisted in raising this insurrection with the intent of forcing a repeal of this law. Upon those two points depended the fate of the trial, for if either the multitude had no such intent, or, if they had, the prisoner took no part in fomenting the insurrection, the prisoner ought to be acquitted. And (added the Judge) "there is no pretence that he personally concurred in any act of violence."

His Lordship concluded by saying: "If the scale should hang doubtful, and you are not fully satisfied that he is guilty, you ought to lean on the favourable side and acquit him."

Gurney's report ends with the note referred to above:

"*The Court sat at Eight o'Clock on the Monday morning; and at Three Quarters after Four on the Tuesday morning the Jury withdrew. They returned into Court at a Quarter after Five o'Clock with a Verdict finding the Prisoner NOT GUILTY.*"

Gordon was lucky—particularly when one considers that much of the medieval horror of the sentence in cases of High Treason was still in force.* One wonders whether this fact may have influenced the jury in their judgment upon this extremely foolish but, as Dickens thought, not at heart bad man. But that Gordon was guilty under the indictment there can be little doubt, permeated with folly though his guilt was. With the example of the Scotch uprising in mind, his indirect incitement to the destruction of the Catholic chapels in London on the first day of the riots was as obvious as it was astute.

However, it should in fairness be recalled that the jury had an opportunity in court of studying Gordon for 21 hours on end, and their verdict possibly reflected the result of their observations.

* The partial hanging, disembowelling alive and burning of the entrails of persons convicted of high treason were not abolished until the Treason Act of 1814. The drawing of condemned traitors to the place of execution on a hurdle and the beheading and quartering were abolished in 1870.

THE NEW LIFE OF DICKENS*

By RALPH STRAUS

LET it be said at once that the latest biography of Dickens is an attractive and, in general, judicious piece of work. It makes excellent reading, and that in spite of the fact that Dame Una Pope-Hennessy's writing is sometimes careless and hardly as dignified as it might be. The two or three chapters which describe in some detail the "plots" of the novels without adding anything to our knowledge of their author might well have been omitted, and in a second edition the one or two slips of the pen will no doubt be rectified; but on the whole a portrait emerges which has vigour and life. It is the first full-length portrait to appear since the publication by the Nonesuch Press in 1938 of *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, and naturally it contains a number of facts which may not be generally known. At the same time, it must be borne in mind that the three volumes of *Letters*, though a fitting memorial to the industry of their editor, Walter Dexter, are far from being exhaustive, and there may be some disappointment among students when they discover the fact that there is nothing of any great importance in the new book which has not already been set down in print.

As usual, however, on the appearance of any new biography of Dickens which attempts to unveil the truth, there are those who are at once "up in arms" at what to them seems to be an unfair attack on Dickens's moral character. (Even to-day there are Dickensians who like to place their idol on an impossibly high pedestal, forgetting the man and remembering only "the institution.") To such people the suggestion that after his separation from his wife Dickens made Ellen Ternan, a young actress, his mistress, is a baseless scandal, all the more odious in view of Dickens's own statements at the time of his domestic crisis. Dame Una, like most of her predecessors, has made a valiant attempt to understand and interpret the once so-carefully hidden factors which led to the separation, and it seems to me that she has treated the whole episode with admirable restraint. Nevertheless, it may be pertinent to call attention here to one or two facts which bear on the matter.

1. If we put aside the letters which Dickens wrote to Ellen Ternan, which may still be shut away under lock and key (though I incline to the belief that they were burnt), it will be true to say that practically all the contemporary letters which deal with the affair have been destroyed. One of the very few exceptions is a letter written by Mrs. Dickens's aunt, Mrs. Thomson, to a friend in Scotland. A copy which I made of this letter and gave to Dexter has been seen by Dame Una and is mentioned in her book. It is in my view genuine, but it is only right to say that Dexter, after much research—he found several small errors in the matter of dates—came to a different conclusion. I ought also to put on record the fact that I have forgotten the name of the correspondent who, nearly twenty years ago, was good enough to send me the document, and I cannot remember whether it was the original letter or a copy which I was permitted to see. Nevertheless, I continue to regard the Thomson letter as genuine and look upon any minor errors in the matter of dates as quite natural in the circumstances: an angry woman eager to pour out her woes to an old friend may be excused for such inaccuracies in a private letter. But, in making use of this letter Dame Una ought not to have been content with a short note "Unpublished MS (W. Dexter)," which is unfair both to Dexter and to myself. It is, perhaps, a small point, but it must not go unnoticed.

* "Charles Dickens." By Dame Una Pope-Hennessy. (Chatto & Windus, 21*s.*)

2. All the major details of Ellen Ternan's association with Dickens which are to be found in Dame Una's book have been derived either from Miss Gladys Storey's *Dickens and Daughter* or from Thomas Wright's *Life of Dickens*. The first of these records the early memories of an exceedingly old lady—Dickens's own daughter—and they *may* be authentic. The second book contains one or two indisputable facts, but depends for the most part on an alleged statement made to the author more than thirty years previously by a Canon who was drawing on his own memory for statements said to have been made to him by Miss Ternan. Those statements, again, *may* be authentic, but the fact remains that to-day we have, so far as I know, no documentary evidence of *anything* bearing on the separation beyond Dickens's own published statements, a bare mention here and there of Miss Ternan, and her legacy of £1,000 in Dickens's will.

3. If Ellen Ternan was Dickens's mistress, what, asks the sceptic, of the late J. W. T. Ley's arguments ? At the time of Wright's *Life*, it may be remembered, he wrote for *The Dickensian* an article entitled "What the Soldier Said." How, he asked, was it possible to "get round" that one impassioned statement made by Dickens at the time of the separation, unless you regarded him as the most arrant liar ? "Two wicked persons," he had declared, had "coupled with this separation the name of a young lady to whom I have a great attachment. . . . Upon my soul and honour, there is not on this earth a more virtuous and spotless creature than that young lady. I know her to be innocent and pure, and as good as my own dear daughters." That is forthright enough, but—to whom did it refer ? Ley himself seems to have had no doubt that the reference was to Ellen Ternan and expressed the utmost scorn for Wright's assumption that *at that time* the actress was no more than an adored young friend who, only at a later date, was persuaded to become his mistress. On the other hand, Walter Dexter took the view that Georgina Hogarth was meant—Kate Dickens's sister who had long been part of his household—and Dame Una is content to follow him, though with an ingenious suggestion of smoke-screens behind which Dickens sought to cover up the truth.

They may be right, but it is pertinent to look rather more closely into the matter. The young lady's name had been "coupled" with the separation. This might mean no more than that she had been at any rate partly responsible for it. But there is the clearest hint that attacks had been made on her moral character, and jealous though the Hogarths and Thomsons may have been and angry to discover that Georgina was not the "disinterested" person they had thought her to be, *would* they have accused her of illicit relations with her brother-in-law ? (How else is the statement to be understood, *if* Georgina was the young woman in question ?) And this at a time when all the family circle must have known about Ellen ! Why ? Just out of spite ? It may be so, but I am not wholly convinced. (It is true that in the recantation signed by Mrs. Thomson and her daughter the words "circumstances deeply affecting the reputation and good name of *others*" are used, but that hardly helps us.)

What, then, is the truth, and will it ever be wholly disinterred ? Probably not. Yet after reading almost every available document, including a long series of Dickens family letters written after the novelist's death, I think of the case of George Eliot and find no difficulty whatever in accepting the fact that for some years Ellen Ternan was Dickens's mistress. More, forgetting for a moment the just and decent claims of biography, I like to picture to myself an emotional drama which, at any rate to an audience of one, suggests something like the truth. I can see an ultra-sensitive, sadly over-worked, dreadfully

worried, and, for all his world-wide fame, disappointed man of genius, unhappily aware that he has long been out of tune with his very "ordinary" wife, and dreaming idly of the Maria who had turned him away long ago and of the equally well-beloved Mary who had died in his arms. And I figure him with a letter received all unexpectedly from Maria who is near and eager to meet him again, and seeing in his mind's eye—was there ever a more vivid one in the history of letters ?—the lovely girl of the past, and, when they do meet again, being horrified to find in her place a Victorian matron with the contours of an Albert Hall. And then, at the darkest moment of all I like to think of him recognising in Ellen Ternan the idealised Maria-Mary whom he had lost. I see him caught up in a strange and beautiful dream, and held there for a while, and then, helped by Wilkie Collins to get away from Forsterian chains and Hogarthian vulgarities, going the way of lesser men . . .

All of which, however, is only a vision. Dame Una Pope-Hennessy goes a more sober way.

IN A LIBRARY

By J. H. McNULTY

HERE in this room with books well lined
From floor up to the ceiling's height,
Here we may gain a brief respite
From cares that vex the heart and mind.

When hawthorn hedges bear their loads
Of flow'rs whose fragrance fills the land,
We go with Pickwick's merry band
On England's white and winding roads.

Or when the changing year grows old,
And suns burn low and great winds rise,
Filling the sober Autumn skies,
And days are short and nights are cold ;

At such a time, on such a night
We read once more the book we love,
Where selfishness with kindness strove,
And pass'd defeated out of sight.

In grim November's gloomy days
When fog has turned blue skies to brown,
We visit ancient London town,
And watch the laggard law's delays.

And when dark winter grips the earth,
And round the house the North winds blow,
Sharp-toothed with frost or driving snow,
We gather round the blazing hearth,

And read once more the well-loved tales
With laughter joy or silent tear,
And in the midnight of the year
Find Christmas light that never fails.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP DRAMATIC SOCIETY

By FRANK J. STAFF

IN the early days of the Fellowship, when its foundation was proved to be a solid one and when the Charitable Guild had been firmly established, the question of a Dramatic Club was mooted ; that is to say, in the years 1902 to 1904. But it was not until the year 1905, the year illumined by Number One of *The Dickensian*, that a definite plan was formed, and when I mention that the organising Secretary was the late Mr. Walter Dexter, it was as certain as night follows day that the Dramatic Club would be successful ; and it certainly was an unqualified success from the year 1905 until late in 1914, when the Hun stopped play and we changed from costumes by May, Raynes and Fox to those supplied by the Government.

1905, and it is now 1945. Forty years ago !

Wait, whilst the writer glances into the mirror. So that was the " face that launched a thousand ships," or, speaking in modern parlance, was *that* the personage who created the characters of the immaculate sartorial Toots, the not so sartorial Artful Dodger, and the conceited coxcomb Tappertit with the shapely legs ? It needs a cursory glance at the press cuttings of the time. Well, well !

In July, 1905, a suggestion was put forward in *The Dickensian* that a Dramatic Society should be formed, and on the 4th of September, at St. Bride's Institute, the first meeting was held and the name of W. Teignmouth Shore (Tinny Shore to his friends) was put forward as the proposed Hon. Assistant Stage Manager. Mr. James Chapman, who was referred to as a well-known amateur actor, promised to devote his energies to the newly-formed Society. I forget now why Mr. Chapman did not devote his energies to the Society, but I was only a small part member at that time and there may have been disagreements, or the gentleman may have had to leave London in pursuit of his business, but I certainly did not have the pleasure of an introduction to Mr. Chapman at that or any future time. The annual subscription of 5*s*. per annum seemed to me to be absurdly small, and part of this would be returned in tickets for the shows. Walter Dexter was appointed Treasurer and Secretary, and he promised to devote his entire energies to the Club and, as after events proved, he kept his word.

On Tuesday, December 19th, 1905, the Society made its inaugural bow on the stage of the Cripplegate Institute before a large and enthusiastic audience. Two pieces were presented : " The Gentleman in the Next House," adapted from *Nicholas Nickleby* by Miss Isabella Pagan, and the " Trial Scene from *Pickwick*," arranged by J. W. T. Ley. Both pieces were well received and very fairly criticised in *The Dickensian* by Arthur Waugh, Managing Director of Chapman and Hall, Ltd. Frances Innocent and Priscilla Craven (Mrs. W. T. Shore) received favourable notices for their portrayals in the first piece. The " Trial Scene " suffered somewhat, owing to the necessary set being beyond the resources of the Cripplegate scene dock, and two of the minor characters did not play with the faithfulness and ability so noticeable in the small part people cast for the later plays. At so early a stage in the Company's history this was excusable. Sam Weller was outstanding in the " Trial Scene " and this will be understood, as the part was taken by Percy Merriman, a prominent actor and entertainer even in those days ; and more prominent still in later years when he was instrumental in forming the famous

" Rooster " gang. In case I omit the fact later, and I have still a long way to go, in those early days Mr. Merriman was a frequent contributor to *The Dickensian* of prose articles, and, believe it or not (but refer to the December Number for 1909) he even dropped into poetry.

" The Old Curiosity Shop " was put into rehearsal within a few weeks, and on Saturday, May 12th, 1906, was produced at the Cripplegate Theatre. The version was by George Lander and was a successful production. Percy Merriman as " Dick Swiveller " was an unmitigated staggerer ; the late A. E. Brookes Cross excellent as ' Sampson Brass " ; Kathleen Marriott was a charming " Little Nell " ; W. Teignmouth Shore realistic as " Quilp " ; Walter Dexter acted well as the " Single Gentleman." The smaller parts were carefully selected and " Kit " stood out in very capable hands. Priscilla Craven played the " Marchioness " with true Dickensian feeling, and it was interesting to contrast this part with her " Mrs. Nickleby " in the December show, for Miss Craven was a charming and *well-formed* lady, if you see what I mean.

Our first President was John L. Toole, and many distinguished actors figured in the list of Vice-Presidents. On the death of J. L. Toole, Herbert Beerbohm Tree (later Sir Herbert) accepted the Presidency in September, 1906, and proved to be no mere figure-head.

The Annual General Meeting of the Dramatic Club was held in a room at Victoria Street, S.W., on May 30th, 1906. W. T. Shore presided and the accounts were presented and passed. Mr. Shore was re-elected Stage Manager with A. E. B. Cross as Assistant. Walter Dexter was unanimously re-elected Secretary and Treasurer. Forgive me for leaving out " the late " where it should appear. Heaven knows it is sufficiently difficult to write irresponsibly of those light-hearted days without continually reminding oneself that old and cherished friends will not be able to read my report.

At the Annual Meeting the writer was elected to fill a vacancy on the Committee and endeavoured to induce the meeting to double the subscription, a refund to be made when purchasing tickets ; but only a very slight alteration was agreed upon.

A little later we commenced rehearsals for the " House of Dombey " ; an adaptation by Mrs. W. T. Shore and Walter Dexter. The play was produced at the Cripplegate Theatre on November 3rd, 1906, and was an unqualified success. A clear, concise and flattering criticism by Arthur Waugh appeared in *The Dickensian* for December, 1906. I do not think the Editor wishes me to give criticisms on the plays referred to ; space will not permit ; and it must suffice to say that the Dramatic Club was very kindly noticed by various prominent London newspapers during its short career, and these notices grew more flattering as time went on.

Our Company was a strong one and the producer had many clever amateurs to select from when casting. Miss Kathleen Marriott as Susan Nipper received a special notice for her performance and so did the Toots. Messrs. W. Dexter, W. T. Shore, A. E. B. Cross, and Mesdames Grein (wife of J. T. Grein, of the *Sunday Times*), Priscilla Craven (Mrs. Shore), Mrs. Arthur Ropes (wife of Adrian Ross, successful lyric writer for many Gaiety Theatre shows), all were most successful in their parts. A very small part was Cousin Feenix. I do not think that he ever had a line of commendation, yet the writer and Walter Dexter would often refer to the careful study of Cousin Feenix by A. J. Chinnery.

The Hon. Secretary, Walter Dexter, recognising that he controlled a capable, and I will venture to write, a talented crowd, showed us what he could do by securing a contract with the management of the Broadway Theatre, New Cross, for one night, December 17th, 1906. The terms were favourable and the profit was allocated to Alderman

Sir William Treloar's Home for Crippled Children. What a joy to work for so laudable an object, and what a night to remember. The theatre was packed in all parts. The Lord Mayor of London and the Lady Mayoress occupied a box, as did Mr. Henry F. Dickens and family, and, of course, a box had been secured for the President, Mr. H. Beerbohm Tree, who sat the performance through. Remember that. The lessee and manager of a London theatre sat through the performance. We all had a peep at him through a hole in the act drop, and had there been a comic countryman in the cast we should have locked him up in a dressing room. The Mayor of Deptford, accompanied by the Town Clerk and other notables, was present. Were we at all nervous ? Well, I know that Mr. Toots was, but as that helped his part, it was put down to his consummate art. After the third act a cheque for £50 was presented to Sir William Treloar by the President, Mr. H. B. Tree, and Mr. Toots and Susan Nipper were presented to Mr. Tree, who had especially asked for them. The manager of the theatre, Mr. Louis Calvert, handed in a cheque for £10 as his donation to the Crippled Children's Fund, and the Mayor of Deptford presented the Lord Mayor with a cheque for £5 as *his* contribution. Then Mr. Tree made a short speech and told the audience that, as it chanced to be his birthday, it would give him much pleasure to add a further £10 to the amount collected. My goodness, what a night ! And if readers imagine that I am writing in too friendly a strain, let them refer to the London Press of December 18th, 1906.

The second Annual General Meeting of the Club was held at 92 Victoria Street, S.W., on September 26th, 1907, B. W. Matz in the chair. Mr. Tree, having expressed his willingness to serve, was re-elected President.

The members learned with regret that W. Teignmouth Shore would be unable to continue with the stage management, his press work demanding the whole of his spare time. The cast of the " House of Dombey " presented him with a gold mounted cigarette holder in a silver case as a token of their esteem and affectionate remembrance. A. E. B. Cross was elected Hon. Stage Manager, and Frank J. Staff was elected Hon. Assistant Stage Manager. Regarding the latter appointment, it was relinquished at an early date, as the position savoured, according to the ill-advised comment of the holder, speaking from his experience of travelling theatrical companies, of a glorified call-boy who was privileged to fetch beer for the stagehands. An ill-timed and unwarranted remark, of course, and uttered partly in jest. I fear the dignity of the Hon. Stage Manager was hurt, and the writer recalls the advice of his old Uncle Bob : " A man of wisdom is one who has a lot to say and keeps silent." I fear my irresponsible utterance was not easily forgotten, for in a short notice of the Society and its doings, contributed by A. E. B. Cross in 1923, the writer's name was not referred to. Alas " sweet are the uses of obscurity," or words to that effect.

About the middle of the year 1907 Walter Dexter was writing a play for the Society, and in due course the following announcement appeared : " Mr. Walter Dexter's new comedy, ' Dolly Varden,' has been booked at the following theatres : The King's Theatre, Hammersmith, December 16th ; Marlborough Theatre, Holloway, December 18th ; Broadway Theatre, New Cross, December 20th."

A very careful criticism appeared in *The Dickensian* of January, 1908, dealing with the Hammersmith performance. Kathleen Marriott as Miggs secured the honours of the evening. The cast was comprised of old members of the Company with two exceptions : the parts of Dolly Varden and Young Joe were played by Marie Lorraine Stevens and Guy H. Inglis respectively.

At the Marlborough Theatre Mrs. H. Beerbohm Tree gave two dramatic recitals during the evening and we all thought, as did a few of the London newspapers, that she made herself somewhat absurdly emotional in her announcement that she had been at the Criminal Courts during the afternoon and she was certain that the audience would be rejoiced that a certain man accused of murder was found not guilty. Incidents in a past life had been unsavoury and we did not rejoice, although we were naturally glad to learn that British Justice could not be prejudiced.

Press notices for the Marlborough and Broadway Theatres were more laudatory, and one paper stated " the cast was the same, but as was only natural the actors were more at home in their respective parts." Of course, they were, and no critic referred to the fact that many a West End show is infinitely better a few weeks after production.

The charities benefiting from these performances were the West London and Great Northern Hospitals, Sir William Treloar's Hamper Fund, Guy's Hospital, and St. John's, Lewisham.

Walter Dexter now had the bit between his teeth and our next booking was for one week and a matinée at the Kennington Theatre in Whitsun Week of 1908. I really believe that W.D. had so much faith in his company that he could have taken them on a provincial tour. " The Old Curiosity Shop " in Whitsun Week was not an ideal booking, but in spite of holidays and warm weather the attendance was good, and the Press kindly referred to an enthusiastic and hard-working company. All the old favourites were represented: Little Nell, Grandfather, Sampson and Sally, Dick Swiveller and Quilp. All had played before with the exception of a newcomer, Miss May Daniel, a convincing Sally Brass. The adaptation was not good, and I believe it was a " Dick's " edition. This was followed by a one-act play, " Dolly Varden," and was well received. Kathleen Marriott as Little Nell in the first piece and then as Miggs, characters so widely different, proved herself to be a capable little actress.

Under the title " Dot," an adaptation from *The Cricket on the Hearth*, by W. Teignmouth Shore, the Society presented a clever little play at the Cripplegate Theatre on Tuesday, December 22nd, 1903. A small cast included Mrs. Grein, already referred to for her able performance in the " House of Dombey " in 1906, F. T. Harry, May Daniel, Kathleen Marriott; others in the cast were new to me.

On December 13th, 1909, " Oliver Twist " was produced at the Broadway Theatre, New Cross; it was booked for one week, including a matinée. The version was new and the adaptation was by Walter Dexter and F. T. Harry. Space will not permit a detailed description of the production. It is old news now, but I will quote one paragraph written by a competent critic. " It was a show worthy of any provincial theatre and in many of its details not unworthy of the traditions of a West End house." That was in 1909, and had it been 1945, with my present knowledge of modern languages, my expression might have been: " Oh boy! What do you know about that?" Bransby Williams was the Fagin and what a perfect performance he gave. Most of the original company were in the cast, the new-comers being Marie Lorraine Stevens, " Nancy "; Lewis Winn, " Monks "; T. L. Adamson, " Sikes "; Harry Pearce, " Charley Bates "; Lilian Gray, " Rose Maylie "; and Verena Gascoigne, " Mrs. Bedwin." F. T. Harry produced the play, and his brother, R. C. Harry, was Stage Manager, Kathleen Marriott played " Oliver " and scored heavily. The Musical Director, John Rodgers, Mus.Bac., was a great acquisition and remained our permanent conductor for some time. I have seen a version of " Oliver Twist " produced at His Majesty's Theatre with Sir H. Beerbohm Tree as Fagin; a thrilling performance by a

wonderful actor, but for an interpretation of sardonic humour, combined with intellectual villainy, no actor could surpass Bransby in the part.

My respect for Bransby was considerably enhanced by his tactful bearing towards the producer. F. T. Harry was a clever amateur and B.W., remember, had a professional reputation as producer and actor; yet our show went smoothly at rehearsals and during the week's engagement. After the matinee the stage was set for "Fagin's Den," and Fagin entertained the Company to dinner. I have the menu before me as I write: front page is headed "Fagin's Den"; then an autographed photograph of B.W., followed by "Angels are watching yer, Oliver, so keep yer eye on the traps at the doors." The inner part contains autographs of the Company, one of the very few autographed menus I treasure. The back page gives the bill of fare.

5.45 p.m.
Pitch into the tuck.

Filletted Sole.
Cutlets, etc.
Sweets.

Boys and girls can swig at the lush, so tip the wink to the covey as waits.

Chairman: Mister Fagin.

I nearly forgot to mention "Bullseye." He was a well-bred bull terrier, and we paid him 25*s.* for his week's work; he was accompanied by a man who saw him to the theatre and attended him home again. After making the terrier's acquaintance I really did not think that an attendant was necessary. Little Oliver was very fearful of him, until Oliver saw me feeding "Bullseye" with lumps of sugar whilst waiting in the wings. After that we were all pals together.

I am sure many readers will remember the scene where Oliver is brought back by Sikes and Nancy. A very tragic scene. It was well worked up by Bransby as Fagin; and then Oliver makes a bolt for the door, which in our scene was centre. He was quickly followed by the Dodger, Bates and Fagin. On arriving at the back of the stage Bransby never failed to grasp our arms and we danced in a circle, singing in a whisper: "A hunting we will go." In a few minutes we were all back again and continued the very tragic scene. If the Dodger smirked, well, it is what he might have done in real life, but the Dodger was thinking of the little bit which had not been witnessed by the audience.

Regarding the financial side of the week's performance, in addition to paying all expenses in connection with the production, £50 was given to the Miller Hospital at Greenwich, £15 to the funds of the Fellowship, and a small balance went to the Club's account for working capital. I believe mention has been made that besides being Treasurer and Secretary, Walter Dexter was also our Business Manager.

In March, 1910, the Dickens Fellowship Dramatic Society ceased to exist as a separate Society and re-appeared, partly at the suggestion of the Council, as the Dickens Repertory Company, under the control of a committee comprising Messrs. Walter Dexter, F. T. Harry, A. E. B. Cross, F. J. Staff, R. C. Harry, and B. W. Matz.

For one night only (I cannot verify the exact date, but it was early in March, 1910) the "Oliver Twist Company" played at Stanley Hall, South Norwood. Quite a smart little theatre and the Company played to a crowded audience. F. T. Harry took the part of Fagin, and the other parts were filled by the original players with a few minor exceptions.

December 12th, 1910, for one week and a matinée, "The Old Curiosity Shop" was booked at the Broadway Theatre, New Cross. Quite a good show, but critics objected to Little Nell rising from her bed at the death of her grandfather.

New blood included H. Malcolm Morley, excellent as Swiveller; Miss V. Grenville, quite good as Little Nell. A. E. B. Cross was unluckily taken ill at the last moment, so the part of Sampson Brass was taken on at very short notice by A. W. Browne, who earned the gratitude of the Company by a very creditable performance. On the whole the show was praised highly by the Press and I recall clever little bits of business—unforced business—by some of the small part people. Maud Philp as Mrs. Jarley attracted my attention in particular. The writer took care of the front of the house as Acting Manager for the week, and was immensely gratified on receiving as his reward the thanks of the Management, and *The Pickwick Papers* in two volumes, illustrated by Cecil Aldin, and suitably inscribed.

Rehearsals for "Barnaby Rudge" started towards the end of October, 1911. This was an adaptation by Walter Frederick Evelyn, a portmanteau name for Walter Dexter, Frederick T. Harry, and A. Evelyn B. Cross. The piece opened on December 11th, 1911, at the Broadway Theatre, New Cross, for one week, including a Saturday matinée, with Bransby Williams as Barnaby. A strong company with a majority of the old and tried members. A few of the minor parts were played by newcomers, intelligently played, let me add. The theatre management helped us to stage excellent scene sets and the stage-hands were most helpful. Costumes by H. and M. Raynes, wigs by Gustave, of Long Acre. It was a brilliant show and I much regret that I was not in a position to see it from the front. Press notices were good and in the case of the old-established London papers a trifle patronising; but then one cannot imagine a paid dramatic critic waxing enthusiastic over "mere amateurs." A fair and friendly note of the production appeared in *The Dickensian* for January, 1912.

As in the case of the "Oliver Twist" production, Bransby entertained the Company to dinner after the Saturday matinée. The menu was headed "Bransby Williams, at Home, at the Maypole Inn, Chigwell." The rioters numbered about thirty, and were most capably organised and controlled by the producer, Frederick T. Harry. At one of the evening performances Arthur Williams was in the dressing room of Bransby Williams, and asked to see "that dashing leader of the rioters, Simon Tappertit." "Well, young man, a good show; and let me tell you that one of the gags you cracked to-night was first used by me when I was your age, in a blood-and-thunder sketch at the Old Vic." The line to which he referred was: "There'll be dirty work at the cross roads to-night." It was kind of Bransby to arrange the introduction. I fear very few of my readers will now recall the name of this fine old comedian, a contemporary of David James, Willie Edouin, Charles Danby, Lionel Rignold, and Arthur Roberts—men whom I idolised before I was seventeen years of age. A notable newcomer to the production of "Barnaby Rudge" was Minnie Watersford, a well-known provincial actress, a charming character on and off the stage. She was cast for Mrs. Rudge. Minnie Watersford was the wife of A. B. Cross, who for many years successfully toured the provinces, and the best remembered of his plays is "The Manxman." A. E. B. Cross was his talented son.

"Oliver Twist" opened at the Broadway Theatre, New Cross, on December 9th, 1912, for a return visit of six nights and a matinée. Notable absentees were Bransby Williams, the Fagin of the 1909 production, and Lorraine Stevens, "Nancy." Madeline Clayton played "Nancy", on this occasion with skill, and created quite a sensation in

the part. Other changes were H. H. Pearce as "Brownlow"; Verena Gascoigne, a graceful "Rose Maylie"; Maud Philp, an excellent "Mrs. Bedwin"; and Frances Wood and Edward Smith as "Mrs. Maylie" and "Harry" respectively. All very worthy additions to the Company. Mr. F. T. Harry was the producer and essayed the part of "Fagin" quite successfully.

Although not a production of the Repertory Company, mention must be made of the "Trial of John Jasper" at the King's Hall, Covent Garden, on January 7th, 1914, as a number of our acting members were in the cast. To wit: Messrs. Walter Dexter, A. E. B. Cross, F. T. Harry, H. H. Pearce, and B. W. Matz. The jury comprised prominent authors and journalists, and the foreman was G. Bernard Shaw, who nearly spoiled the whole show through trying to be too clever in delivering the verdict. F. J. S. was a collector of tickets, with an eye on gate crashers. It was wonderful publicity for the Fellowship and the idea emanated from a suggestion by F. T. Harry to Walter Dexter who passed it on to the Council of the Dickens Fellowship.

"Barnaby Rudge" was revived for one week and a matinée on April 20th, 1914, at the Kennington Theatre. We were fortunate in having Bransby in his old part of Barnaby, and the cast had very few alterations from the New Cross week in 1911. Miss Minnie Watersford was unable to play her old part of Mrs. Rudge owing to a provincial contract, and the part was played very successfully by Miss Madeline Clayton. Young Joe was in the very capable hands of Edward Smith, in lieu of Guy Inglis, who had been very useful to us on previous occasions. The Acting Manager for the Company was Oliver Daly, son of Charles Daly, an Actor Manager of repute. Press notices, though short, were kind; the management agreed that it was a good show and was satisfied with the week's business.

The success of the Repertory Company was due to a great extent to the keenness and intelligence shown at rehearsals and to the cast always being punctual for the call; our members were rarely late. We had our bright moments too, and when playing at the Broadway Theatre we adjourned before and after rehearsals to an Italian tea-shop in New Cross Road. How I longed to play an Italian part one day, for I could then make up like the proprietor. Delightfully comic, and he did not know it, which made it all the funnier. We were all light-hearted revellers and one of the most irresponsible members of the crowd once found a black beetle in a currant bun, to the horrified dismay of the proprietor, who turned nearly as black as the beetle when he found that it was made of rubber. His tea room was surrounded by plate glass mirrors and by zig-zagging a piece of wax across one, it really looked badly cracked. This time he turned blue, and fearing apoplexy, I hurriedly wiped the glass clear. As somebody said once in history: "He never smiled again," not at us anyway.

The most important rehearsal is, of course, the dress and scene rehearsal before production.

We were putting on "Barnaby Rudge" with Bransby as Barnaby, and at the dress rehearsal we came to the scene where the rioters persuade Barnaby to join them, and tear him from his distressed mother. Barnaby asks for the Raven, and his line was: "Give me the bird." We had been rehearsing for about four weeks and that was the first time the significance of the words was noted. Bransby Williams made a few remarks and that line was cut.

The writer is a cynical critic, but freely admits that he has never witnessed characters from Dickens's works so faithfully and successfully portrayed as were the interpretations of the Dickens Repertory Company. The reason is apparent, for the producers in each case were keen Dickensians and cast the plays with judgment. The players,

amateurs with a few exceptions, knew and loved their Dickens, and, in a sense, lived the character they represented.

I once played in "Oliver Twist" with actors and actresses well known in the provinces, and discovered by judicious questioning that, with three exceptions, none of the cast had read the book. Sikes played the part of a ruffian burglar, but it was not the Sikes of Dickens. In the garret bedroom scene he had his head of curly black hair nicely brilliantined and, with a blue spot lime on him, looked quite a pretty boy. The juvenile lady might have been wonderful in "East Lynne," but as Rose Maylie she was a stick.

In June of 1914 Walter Dexter was toying with the possibilities of *Bleak House* and *Great Expectations*, and on August 4th, 1914—well, you all know what happened then.

I have tried to write a faithful account of a very happy band of players. If I have failed to mention one or other of them, I know that the omitted person will forgive me; believe me, the mistake is unintentional. I have a tender thought for the small part actor and actress and do not forget that they all played their useful little parts with much conscientiousness.

So now, quoting from *American Notes*:

> "Farewell; that painful word which mingles with our every thought and deed; which haunts our cradle-heads in infancy, and closes up the vista of our lives in age."

THE DICKENS HOUSE

PLANS are in hand for the reinstatement and reopening of The Dickens House at as early a date as possible. A great deal of work is entailed and a great deal of expense. If a further large number of Friends of The Dickens House would enrol themselves, the responsibilities of the Trustees would be considerably lightened. Will you not join? Your commitment would be but an annual subscription of your own choosing—no matter how small. The Friends have borne the running expenses during the war, but much more is needed now.

The Walter Dexter Memorial Fund has been established to provide a sorely needed Endowment Fund for the Dickens House. The latest list of subscribers appears below. Branches are particularly requested to note the need and to arrange functions for and in every way to assist the Fund. The announcement is made on p. 54 that the Bromley Branch has decided to devote alternate meetings throughout the season to the task of raising money for the Fund. This highly praiseworthy plan is commended to the attention of many far larger Branches.

THE WALTER DEXTER MEMORIAL FUND

Twenty Pounds.—Count de Suzannet.

Fourteen Pounds.—Rochester Branch (proceeds of Whist Drive organised by Mrs. M. Machin).

Two Guineas.—Mr. A. R. Rule, Mr. F. W. Staff.

Two Pounds.—Mr. A. Ll. Matthison.

One Guinea.—Dr. E. Ellsworth Hipsher, Mr. Robert Nelson, Lt.-Col. W. M. H. Spiller.

Half-Guinea.—Mr. Dudley Aukland, Miss A. Fennings, Miss B. Lambert, Mr. J. F. Sutton, Mr. T. V. Tothill.

Six Shillings and Sixpence.—Miss M. M. Levy.

Five Shillings and Sixpence.—Miss Sylvia Barras.

Five Shillings.—Christchurch Branch (Second contribution), Mr. C. W. Hett, Miss Peggy Webling.

Four Shillings.—Mr. B. Staples.

TOTAL TO DATE, £400 4*s*. 8*d*.

DICKENS WITHOUT PHIZ?

By d'A. P. YARRE

I CANNOT help admiring the decision of the Editor of *The Dickensian* to print in the last number the article by Mr. Millican entitled "Phiz Without Sparkle"; it is surely a matter of Dickensian interest, but it obviously calls for some reply.

I

The article contains three themes: (*a*) Mr. Millican's dislike of Phiz's drawings, stigmatised as "a permanent burden on his (Dickens's) shoulders"; "a species of literary barnacle void alike of serious intrinsic merit and aesthetic beauty" (I question whether a barnacle literary or otherwise can have merit and/or beauty); "unattractive Victorian caricatures"; "the unlovely drawings"; "so dull": "hideousness"; "misshapen women and peculiar men"; "incredibly strange-looking female . . . is a really beautiful young woman"; "a spindly-legged monstrosity . . . is held to be . . . a good specimen of manly beauty"; "macabre and unpleasant"; "distorted effusions"; (*b*) his wish for all novels to be without other illustrations than scenery and backgrounds; and (*c*) his desire to induce everyone else to adopt his point of view.

I have no desire to indulge in dialetic or to make points in debate; the position calls for wider treatment. One can readily admit Mr. Millican's right to hold any opinion he thinks fit (after all this is still a free country) and one can sympathise with, although it is not necessary to share, his dislike of Phiz, or his wish for novels to be issued without illustrations—he is ready to make a small concession as regards scenery, but when he wants to induce everyone else to adopt his attitude, the case begins to remind one of Æsop's fable of the Fox who Lost his Tail.

II

I wonder if Mr. Millican refreshed his memory about Dickens's career before proposing to abolish Phiz "(and Cruikshank as well, for that matter)." Dickens began as an author at a time when the great period of the Caricaturists, of whom Rowlandson and Gillray were the leaders, was not quite passed; it was a gross, coarse, and cruel age. to which the grotesque was a butt for laughter; a cripple or a person with an ill-favoured face was comic, even if he were quite good-looking his features and gait could be and were distorted; a drunken orgy or an untidily dressed female was an object of ridicule; a dilapidated and tumbling house had a comic appeal; even a diseased and gnarled tree was considered amusing; mistakes of and accidents to the unskilled afforded entertainment to the onlooker. One has only to look at Cruikshank's illustrations to *Sketches by Boz* when they were issued in volume form to find examples.

Let us now consider how Phiz came to be associated with Dickens. The story is told in sufficient detail for my purpose by Dickens himself in the preface to *The Pickwick Papers*. I will only recapitulate that that book arose out of an idea, not of Dickens's own, but of an artist named Robert Seymour who was to supply a series of sporting sketches of a ludicrous nature for which Dickens was to supply the letterpress. This scheme was revised, on Dickens's demand, to one in which the plates were "to arise naturally out of the text." Seymour agreed and made his drawings "from the proof-sheets." After the second number Seymour took his own life out of pique and disappointment

as Dickens had suggested some alterations in one of his drawings. Then R. W. Buss was engaged as an illustrator, but proved unsatisfactory, and Hablot Browne was commissioned, signing his drawings "Phiz." He was a rising artist (only twenty-one years of age) of great ability and technical skill, who adapted himself to the caricaturist and humoristic feeling of the age; redrawing where necessary the Seymour and Buss plates for the back numbers, and realising the extravagances of Cruikshank in drawing, as well as the rather savage attacks made in writing by Dickens on abuses like the Fleet Prison, the Poor Law Institutions, and the Yorkshire schools.

I would recall also that both John Leech and W. M. Thackeray were among the unsuccessful applicants for the position of illustrator to the *Pickwick Papers* to succeed Seymour. They evidently did not share Mr. Millican's opinion that Dickens should not be illustrated. Moreover, Thackeray drew his own illustrations to his novels, and at a later date (1853) Cuthbert Bede embellished (my term) for himself his lively skit on Oxford University life "Verdant Green," and for my own part I would not have those books without their illustrations.

III

It will be noticed that as the over-emphasis of vulgarities gave way gradually to less savage but not less pointed satire, in the course of Dickens's progress, so Phiz still continued amenable and his illustrations kept pace with that gradual change as can be seen from the time of *Pickwick* through the successive books till, when *Bleak House* was reached, both novelist and artist attain the full height of their powers and with both of them the satire is the more effective because more restraint is exercised.

Phiz was an artist and a skilful draughtsman with a talent for a fine line and a keen appreciation of the beautiful, and whenever he had an opportunity in his illustrations of pursuing his own ideals he seized upon it to an extent that Cruikshank never achieved; look at the picture of the Five Sisters of York in *Nicholas Nickleby*, study some of his drawings of horses or landscape in any of the books, especially observe the interior of Tulkinghorn's room in *Bleak House*, or the picture called "Martha" in *David Copperfield*. No wonder that Dickens and Phiz worked hand-in-glove for more than twenty years without a wry word; their names are as inseparable as those of Boswell and Johnson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Besant and Rice, Gilbert and Sullivan.

Mr. Millican speaks of "'Phiz's' concepts of the Smallweeds and Guppys"; but they were not Phiz's, they were Dickens's own, pictured by Phiz; they were drawn under Dickens's direction (for Dickens always chose the incidents to be illustrated) and submitted for his approval, and were not etched until Dickens was satisfied down to the last detail. As to the statement that "no other author has been saddled with so much illustration," surely the boot is on the other leg; never were illustrators so under the thumb of the author as were Dickens's artists. Read his letters of suggestion and criticism to Browne, Stone, Leech, Doyle, and Fildes.

Again, Mr. Millican complains that Phiz's drawings shew "vital points of the plot given away," so spoiling the story for the reader; can he indicate *one* of Phiz's drawings in which the progress of the story is anticipated unless the future development of the plot is indicated in the text? It might be further asked: How could Phiz possibly so mar the interest when the future numbers of the story were not even in manuscript?

IV

There is one other aspect of the matter that calls for comment. I read: "the deterring effects of the Phiz style of drawing . . . are especially noticeable on the children of to-day." This is indeed surprising; from my own personal observation children positively revel in the illustrations to *Oliver Twist* (Cruikshank's work) and in those to the *Old Curiosity Shop* and *David Copperfield*, all of which happen also to be children's favourites among Dickens's works. "They (the drawings) belong to that terrifying world that is associated with 'Ingoldsby Legends' (which was never intended for children) and 'Alice in Wonderland.'" I suppose this should also apply, although Mr. Millican does not say so, to "Gulliver's Travels" and "Robinson Crusoe." In my opinion the fact is that children delight in pictures, and that is one of the reasons for the popularity of the elaborately illustrated Children's Encyclopædias and such publications, and also why children will usually avoid a book that has no pictures in it, whether written by a genius like Dickens or by any one else. (Was it not the illustrations to Ainsworth's historical romances that made those books so attractive to a former generation of youthful readers?)

Some children may "put them back with a shudder" but according to my experience the majority of children do nothing of the sort, and certainly Phiz's style of drawing is infinitely preferable to the inane extravagances indulged in by the artists who draw for the children's "Comics" and similar modern weekly periodicals said to be popular with modern youngsters.

Dickens himself knew the advantage of illustrations, or he would not have taken so much trouble with them. When, in 1867, he revised all his works for issue in the "Charles Dickens" edition, he included in each book a selection of what he considered the most suitable pictures. And when he wrote *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Hard Times*, and *Great Expectations* as serials in "Household Words" and "All the Year Round," although they had then no illustrations, he had them illustrated when they were first issued complete in volume form, or later. We can only infer that Dickens, in common with other novelists of his time, considered illustrations essential and that he found Phiz his ideal illustrator, and if that be the case we have no right to question his judgment.

Mr. Millican thinks his suggestion of a new edition of Dickens's works from which the "illustrations by Hablot K. Browne (and Cruikshank as well, for that matter)" were completely eliminated would be a "most pleasing post-war reform." Yet he says: "Publishers tell us that the designs on dust-covers have a distinct bearing on the sales of works of fiction." What does he really want? He can't have it both ways. He calls his suggestion a reform. It would be more than a reform; it would be a disastrous revolution! Let us have a new edition of Dickens by all means, as these delightful books are practically unobtainable at the present time, but not without the work of that talented artist and conscientious illustrator PHIZ. I, for one, decline to part with my tail just because Mr. Millican has (quite inadvertently, I sincerely hope) parted with his.

THE CIRCUMLOCUTION OFFICE

By G. H. STUART-BUNNING, O.B.E.

THE Civil Service under various aliases, the Circumlocution Office and Red Tape being only two of many, has been the butt of satirists and comedians for many a year; indeed, the subject is perennial and vies with the mother-in-law joke in popularity, but with a difference. Jokes against the ladies mentioned are not always ill-natured, those against Red Tape almost invariably are. Red Tape has always had its defenders and when Dickens first published *Little Dorrit* he was accused of exaggeration in his pictures of the Merdles, the Barnacles, and the Circumlocution Office, but this was all in the day's work. A certain type of critic seemed to have said to himself, "Another book by Mr. Dickens!—exaggerated of course," and to have based his review on that theory. For once in a way the great man did not give way to indignation, but in a note on the bound volume quietly marshalled his sources of information and concluded with the sarcastic note that he would let judgment go by default and "accept the assurance" (on good authority) that nothing like them was ever known in this land.

Gilbert Chesterton ranked the Circumlocution Office as among Dickens's finer work, comparable with his account of Tellson's Bank in *A Tale of Two Cities* and it may be asked whether the critics themselves actually knew what they meant by exaggeration. What they implied was that Dickens exaggerated his facts, but this is just what he did not do. To cite two other books, there was chapter and verse for all and more that he wrote of Yorkshire schools in *Nicholas Nickleby*, and every student of political elections knows that in *Pickwick* the bribery, corruption and the general proceedings at Eatanswill are understated as compared with what took place at actual elections. What Dickens often did was to overcolour his embellishments. No one need believe or, indeed, is asked to believe, that Meagles actually collared Daniel Doyce in the Circumlocution Office and denounced him to Clennam as a notorious rascal and a public offender for daring to invent an improvement. What Dickens wished to do was to paint boldly the way in which inventors were treated if they were poor and what could be more effective than his account of the Committee which examined Doyce's invention. Two members too blind to see it, two others too deaf to hear it, one too lame to get near it, and the final member too pig-headed to look at it. Actually, Dickens was attacking much more than circumlocution or red tape, he was attacking the system and the people which produced it. Chesterton, in 1908, said roundly that England is still ruled by the great Barnacle family, and in a striking passage, that the Barnacles have beaten Dickens. That was going somewhat too far, but G.K.C. was not altogether without warrant. I know a city where in my time the Member spent thirty-five thousand pounds in what his friends called acts of charity and benevolence, but other people used very different terms, and there is a town where even in this year of grace, the sitting Member is said to have put a ten shilling note on every brick of that large place. Jobbery in higher offices is also within my experience. I remember a Postmaster General who illegally "franked" thousands of circulars from a company in which he was interested and signalised his last day at the Post Office by signing a contract to which his chief officers were strongly opposed, and a month or so later he joined the Board of that great company. Another Postmaster General was appointed for no other reason than that he was a noble peer and a third for no reason at all except that something had to be found for him for he was high up

in the select circle of the Barnacles, but the worst case of all was when a certain Prime Minister, in order to form a Coalition Government, was forced to dismiss a brilliant and successful Minister because his post was coveted by a Barnacle. As to inventions, just about the time G.K.C. published his book, I was warning Post Office people not to waste their time on inventions, however meritorious they might seem, as they would only meet with disappointment and disillusion. I ought to add that matters have improved in that direction. The doctrine of doing as little as possible was not unknown even in the Post Office. One Postmaster, I know, used to attend about the forenoon, sign any papers put before him, have a glass of sherry with a biscuit, and amble to his club, sometimes, but not always, returning about four to sign a few more papers. And for this he drew about seven hundred a year. It is interesting to consider how this state of things came into existence and one cause was the incorrigible reluctance of our forefathers to move in matters relating to the public service. Ministers and great civil servants were all good Latinists in those days, but they construed *festina lente*, not as hurry slowly but as never hurry at all and, indeed, never move until you are pushed. One of the reasons for the American War of Independence was the interminable delays experienced by the Colonists in reply to their petitions, and in Dickens's time Lord Melbourne, Prime Minister and mentor to the youthful Victoria, used to remark testily if anything new was set before him, " Can't you let it alone ? "

What was called dignity meant sloth. Everything had to be dealt with at great length and in ponderous language, and to illustrate this here is a Post Office story of my own time. A sorter forgot to put a bill into a bag and, called upon for an explanation, wrote " Error admitted, much regretted and greater care will be taken in future." It was a perfect reply but was returned to him as disrespectful and not until he had said the same thing in some two hundred words was it allowed to go forward. The delays caused by leisureliness and dignity will scarcely be believed but I know of one case in which they caused the plan for a new Post Office to travel among the G.P.O., the Office of Works and the Treasury for seven years, and when finally they were approved they were useless as the work had outgrown them.

The greatest cause of the evil was corruption, especially that kind of corruption known as patronage and in the latter part of the eighteenth century it is not too much to write that this country was saved from internal ruin by a small but devoted body of men outside and inside the Civil Service. All the children of patronage were not evil and there were in the Service men appointed by patronage themselves who recognised the curse and strove to carry out the suggestions, for they cannot be called recommendations, of the many committees appointed by Pitt the Younger.

The main obstacle was the public attitude to corruption. The National purse was deep and wide and what was it for, except for him who could to dip his hands in it ; if he failed to do so, there was something wrong with him, as when Young Pitt refused to take a sinecure to which he was entitled by all precedent, the general coffee-house babble was that he was a quixotic fool.

The noblest minds were not free from infection. Burke and Johnson each accepted a pension in circumstances which would be considered discreditable to-day and even Macaulay admits that he ought to have opposed a Bill in the House but did not do so as an office he held was at stake. The general attitude therefore was, that the man who could not get a picking said of the man who could : " Lucky beggar ; I would I were he." The Law and the Navy were the least affected,

though the famous "Black Book" of 1834 said that sinecures in the English Law Courts amounted to more than £62,000 a year and there were a number of superfluous posts in the Navy, all well paid, for the less necessary a post the higher the salary seems to have been the rule, but, these professions as compared with the Church, the Army, and the politicians, could have said with Clive in India that they were astonished at their moderation.

The Church was a hotbed of corruption. Apart from sinecures, livings were openly bought, often by men who had no idea of taking up duty. The "Black Book" gives a case in which a clergyman held eleven livings, there were others holding seven or eight, and the same authority says that out of about eleven thousand livings only five thousand parsons were resident. Army commissions were bought and sold and commanding officers were allowed to make what they would out of large allowances for victualling and clothing their men. Had there been a powerful public opinion these things would have been swept away in a moment but there was none. Clamour aplenty, but it came mainly from the vocal voteless and there was no power behind it. A king could and did bestow a Bishopric on his infant son with nothing more than a shrug of the public shoulders, but it was among the politicians that corruption was most rife and it was this evil that was attacked by Dickens.

Something had certainly been done but the position as Dickens saw it and as it was may be simply stated.

The Barnacle, titled or untitled, who became a minister first of all saw that his salary and sinecures were safe and if he was good natured, gave some of the latter to his sons and brothers, not forgetting his sisters, his cousins and his aunts, together with ladies whose relationship with him was more obvious than reputable. These pious duties performed, he turned his attention to his extensive patronage, including nomination, which meant election of members of parliament, and nomination which meant appointment of candidates for posts in the Civil Service. The former went to men who would support the Ministry; the latter strictly by favour and there was no mention of such a vulgar thing as work, indeed one minister offering a post to a friend, said that he could personally do all the work in two hours that his friend would be called upon to do in two months, adding as a final inducement: "It will not interfere with your shooting." It might happen that the actual incumbent of the post was a worthy man and his successor absolutely unworthy but that made no difference. The Departments were helpless, so was the Treasury. The nomination was made and that was final.

It has been objected even by those who agree that the old Civil Service was bad, that Barnacle Junior is overdrawn and such a complete nitwit could never have found a place even in patronage days. The answer is that he could and did and the evidence is complete. In 1873, the evidence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer before a committee was "I suppose there was never such a thing as a man being appointed to a clerkship in a public office because he was supposed to be fit for the place." More striking though is the witness who submitted a return of 55 persons appointed between 1836 and 1854; and now we are getting to the Dorrit period. Some were incompetent through age, others "perfectly unqualified," and one man "really could not read or write, he was almost an idiot."

In 1855, a Government Report said that the higher-paid posts—not the highest—went to the most feeble sons in families, even though they were mentally or physically incapacitated, and masses of other evidence could be cited but it is only necessary to add that the Barnacles Junior resented the suggestion that they should do some work and

openly stated that they would not work. After that anyone who says that Barnacle Junior is overdrawn is a bold man.

Barnacle Junior was not the figment of an excitable novelist's brain; he was not even a "horrible example" chosen to suit the purpose of Dickens. He was one of many and to Dickens's other titles of fame can be added that of Civil Service Reformer.

NOTES ON *LITTLE DORRIT*

By T. W. HILL

(*Continued from page* 203, *Vol. xli.*)

Chapter XX

1. FAMILY SKELETON. The family skeleton, something to be concealed from the public gaze, is very old, but Thackeray is credited with giving it literary currency by using it in a contribution to "Punch" in 1845: "There is a skeleton in every house."

2. LO THE POOR INDIAN. From Alexander Pope's "Essay on Man."

> "Lo! the poor Indian! whose untutored mind
> Sees God in clouds or hears Him in the wind . . . "

Chapter XXI

1. HATCHMENT ALWAYS UP. Hatchment is a corruption of the heraldic Atchievement (modern achievement) signifying the completion of a life. It exhibits the escutcheon of the deceased with all the quarterings and impalements, supporters, crest, motto, etc., and is placed after his death in front of his house or in some other conspicuous place.

2. MIDAS WITHOUT THE EARS. Midas, King of Phrygia, renowned for his immense wealth, once acted as judge in a musical contest between Pan on the flute and Apollo on the lyre. He decided in favour of Pan, and thereupon Apollo in anger changed his ears into those of an ass. He concealed his disfigurement under his Phrygian cap, but the dreadful secret was divulged by his barber who whispered into the earth "King Midas has ass's ears" and the whisper was taken up by a reed (rush) which repeats the secret every time it rustles in the wind.

3. STORR AND MORTIMER. The fashionable jewellers of the period. The business was in New Bond Street, and was later acquired by Hunt and Roskell.

4. SON-IN-LAW. An accepted term at the time for step-son.

5. CORE OF AN IMMENSE DRESS. Although the crinoline had not appeared in 1826, the date of the story, the skirts were worn very "full" and wired; they might measure several yards round.

6. JACK-IN-THE-GREEN. On May Day, the Spring Festival, chimney-sweeps used to parade the streets, one of them inside a light framework like a pyramid covered with "greenery" with a "window" for the occupant to be able to see out. This gentleman was "Jack-in-the-green." The appearance or disappearance of the Countess coming down the stairs in her voluminous skirts would certianly resemble such an apparition.

7. CLOSED UP BY THE BOSOM. When the ladies retired from the dinner-table to the drawing-room, the hostess would be the last in the procession.

8. JUNO . . . JUDITH. Juno was the Roman goddess who represented the embodiment of womanhood with all its implications and attributes. Judith was the Jewish heroine who saved her town by slaying its besieger. The allocation of the invisible Countess as Juno to the Treasury and as Judith to the Bishop is most discerning.

9. ROOT OF ALL EVIL. For the sake of a telling antithesis Dickens has wilfully misquoted. "The love of money is the root of all evil" (I Tim., VI, 10), not money itself.

10. AS INVULNERABLE AS ACHILLES. A penetrating diagnosis, in view of what happened in Book II, Chapter XXV, even if it were only a guess on the part of Physician. Achilles *had* a vulnerable spot—his heel. His

mother had dipped him as a child in the Styx to make him invulnerable but held him by the heel which of course remained out of the water. He lost his life from an arrow wound in his heel. The strongest tendon in the human body is that connecting the heel with the muscles in the calf of the leg; it is called the tendon of Achilles.

Chapter XXII

1. INTO THE GEORGE. Among the many galleried inns formerly situated in Borough High Street only two, the White Hart and the George are mentioned by Dickens. The White Hart was the scene of Mr. Pickwick's first sight of Sam Weller; it was demolished in 1889. The George, a small portion of which still remains with its last vestige of gallery, receives only this short reference although Dickens must have known it well. It was acquired for preservation by the National Trust in 1937.

Chapter XXIII

1. WITNESSES OF ABEL'S MURDER. It was quite a convention of Victorian art that pictures such as Abraham's Sacrifice, and other subjects from Holy Writ, should have as part of their composition a shaft of light from above centred on the head of the principal figure. Perhaps it was borrowed from the "limelight" (what is now called a spot-light) on a darkened stage in melodrama. Such pictures were common in the illustrated Bibles dear to the heart of a past generation. Phiz's illustrations of Tulkinghorn's chamber in *Bleak House* and Dombey after his fall make use of the convention.

2. OFT IN THE STILLY NIGHT. One of Thomas Moore's "Irish Melodies" that has retained its popularity to the present day.

3. GOLDEN BOWL—I MEAN BOND. Flora's memory was probably of the verse in Scripture: "Or ever the silver cord be loosed or the golden bowl be broken." Ecc. XII, 6.

4. OIL OF SOMETHING. Probably oil of vitriol.

5. OF ALL THE STRANGEST NAMES. Dickens was fond of inventing odd names and then poking fun at them. "Tamaroo—which seemed impossible" is a good instance from *Martin Chuzzlewit*; Peggotty in *David Copperfield* is another, Betsey Trotwood constantly girding at it: "the woman with the pagan name," "that South Sea Island name," "the woman with the savagest of names"; in *Great Expectations* Orlick "pretended that his Christian name was Dolge—a clear impossibility": and now it is *Little Dorrit*.

6. SOMETHING FROM A SEED-SHOP. Founded on this passage and in witness of Dickens's popularity, a dwarf species of alyssum has received the name of Little Dorrit: there are two or three varieties one of which is spotted.

7. IT'S ALL YOUR EYE. It's all nonsense, from the saying "It's all my eye and Betty Martin," which, according to Joe Miller, is a sailor's rendering of a petition heard in a church abroad: "Ah! mihi, beata Martine," which of course was mere nonsense to him. The story is probably apochryphal as "mihi" would not be pronounced "my eye" by any foreigner.

8. DRAINED THE CUP OF LIFE TO THE DREGS. This saying receives apt illustration in Dryden's play "Aurungzebe," Act IV, Scene I:

> "And from the dregs of life think to receive
> What the first sprightly running could not give."

Chapter XXIV

1. THOSE WHO WILL NOT SEE. The well-known proverb is included in Ray's collection (1670) "Who so blind as he that will not see?" and dates back at least a century and a half before that time to Borde, who writes in the "Breviary of Helthe" (1547) "Who is blynder than he yt wyl not see?"

2. THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK. A French state prisoner in the Bastille for about thirty years, dying in 1703. No less than eleven persons have been mentioned as possibly the prisoner but in spite of the most painstaking investigations, his identity has never been satisfactorily established.

3. OUR MUTUAL FRIEND. Dickens appears to have been fond of using this incorrect description of a friend common to two or more people. It occurs in *Bleak House* (1852). here (1855), and in defiance of convention

Dickens chose it for the title of a book in 1864. (See Fowler: "Modern English Usage.")

4. STARTED OFF AT SCORE. The commoner form of the saying, taken from the sporting world, is "started off at scratch," that is, from the scratch scored in the ground to mark the starting point. Hence, to start off at score is to start off at full speed.

5. BROUGHT HOME LIKE THE 5TH OF NOVEMBER. The old effigies of Guy Fawkes were seated in a chair carried by two small children. The analogy is perfect: the same analogy is used with great effect in *Bleak House*, Chapter XXVI, when old Smallweed visited George's Gallery: "a group at first sight scarcely reconcilable with any day in the year but the fifth of November."

6. PICKLED SALMON. Salmon generally gets the blame if people are ill or overcome after a feast. Dickens puts the case exactly in *Pickwick Papers*, Chapter VIII, where the gentlemen return from the cricket supper: Snodgrass accounts for his condition by saying: "It wasn't the wine, it was the salmon," and Dickens adds: "somehow or other it never *is* the wine in these cases."

7. STATUE BRIDE. An old conceit drawn from the classical story of Pygmalion.

8. LITTLE GOSLING STREET, LONDON DOCKS. This looks like a real address that might invite the searches of topographical enthusiasts, but Harben's "Dictionary of London" does not mention it, so we must conclude that it never existed.

9. NOT A WORD, NOT A BREATH. This recalls Jingle's conspiracy of silence with Tupman (*Pickwick Papers*, Chapter VIII):

"Be careful," said Mr. Jingle, "not a look."
"Not a wink," said Mr. Tupman.
"Not a syllable."
"Not a whisper."

10. LAID UP IN ORDINARY. A ship is said to be laid up in ordinary when she is out of commission and lies at the quay tied up and "snugged down."

CHAPTER XXV

1. PENTONVILLE. An outlying district of Islington and Clerkenwell, developed from the estate of Henry Penton, M.P. Building began about 1773 but it was not for seventy or eighty years that the area was covered with streets, considerable spaces remaining open as fields, gardens, etc. Between Pentonville and Gray's Inn Road was the valley of the Fleet (see Chapter XIII, Note 3).

2. COFFEE BIGGIN. A biggin (corrupted from the Gaelic piggin, a small pitcher with a handle) is a vessel perforated below to hold coffee-grounds while boiling water is poured over them. The forerunner of the modern percolator.

CHAPTER XXVI

1. GRAVE OLD-FASHIONED CITY STREETS. Now of course mostly rebuilt and little used as residences. Many were demolished by air-raids in the first and second world wars.

2. MOONCALVES. A word with a curious history; a mooncalf was originally a shapeless monstrosity of birth supposed to be due to the influence of the moon; it gradually came to be applied to a congenital idiot and hence any stupid fellow or blockhead.

3. IN THOSE TIMES. That is, about 1826, the date of the story.

4. BOHEMIANS. A term applied to folks of irregular habits and those who defy convention; from the fact that the first gypsies who entered France came from Bohemia, in 1427. They were allocated to the Parisian suburb of St. Denis.

5. PARTICULARLY ON SUNDAYS. Sunday afternoon is always a popular time at Hampton Court Palace for visitors; then the State Apartments and gardens are crowded. Perhaps the noise disturbed Mrs. Gowan's afternoon nap.

6. CROW TO PLUCK. Equivalent to saying that one has reason to complain or to call to account. The expression was known to Shakespeare: "We'll pluck a crow to ether" ("Comedy of Errors," Act III, Scene I)

Not so strong an expression as "a bone to pick" which implies a quarrel as of two dogs trying to gnaw the same bone and resenting interference.

7. ANOTHER OLD LADY. "Who must have had something real about her or she could not have existed, but it was certainly not her hair or her teeth or her figure or her complexion." Compare this exposure with the description of Mrs. Skewton in *Dombey and Son*: "false curls, false eyebrows, false teeth and false complexion . . . they took her to pieces and put the little of her that was real on a bed."

CHAPTER XXVII

1. TEAM OF HORSES COULDN'T DRAG HER BACK. An expression derived from one of the inhuman methods of execution in the Middle Ages, when, for certain offences, the culprit was dismembered by having the limbs torn away by ropes attached to horses pulling in four directions.

2. MOUNTAINS OF OUR MOLEHILLS. This well-known expression is to be found in Foxe's "Book of Martyrs" (1570): "To much amplifying things yt be but small, makyng mountaines of molehils."

3. SPOTTED DOGS. The origin of these so-called Dalmatians is uncertain but apparently the breed is closely related to the pointer; it is supposed that it may have been brought from India; it is certain that it did not come from Dalmatia. As a carriage dog it is excellent as it will run for miles without tiring behind or under a gig or a dogcart (which does not get its name from this fact).

CHAPTER XXIX

1. GARRAWAY'S in Change Alley, Lombard Street, and JERUSALEM Coffee House in Cowper's Court, Cornhill, were well-known places of meeting, and would be the natural resort of Mr. Flintwinch in search of business for the house of Clennam & Co.

CHAPTER XXX

1. CARD OF VISIT. A quite unnecessary literal translation of *carte de visite*. One feels sure than Blandois, who had a good knowledge of English idiom, would have said "visiting card." He called himself "an excellent master of English and French," and he spoke of *Mrs.* Clennam, not Madame. Nor would he have said "Holy Blue." (See also Chapter I, Note 3.)

2. OUT OF SIGHT OUT OF MIND. A saying that goes as far back as Thomas à Kempis (1384-1471) for it is to be found in the "Imitatio Christi": "And when He is out of sight, quickly also is He out of mind."

3. WATCH WITH TWO CASES. These double cases, the outer one often elaborately ornamented, can be seen in most good museums; their date is about the middle of the eighteenth century.

4. THREE PARTS OF MY CHARACTER. Mr. Blandois was evidently given to self-examination, and apparently saw no flaws in his estimable character. He says that three parts of his character is adoration of female beauty. The other quarter may be divided (equally if you like) among the following qualities as testified by himself in various passages in the book: graceful (morally no less than physically), frank, proud, genuine, fair, born to govern, born to be served, pious, sensitive, brave, ardent, conscientious, imaginative, lover of the picturesque, sympathetic, polite, given to little gallantries, born to triumph, noble of nature, playful, all impatient, and always a gentleman. The reader will note that there is no mention of modesty.

CHAPTER XXXI

1. VAPID LITTLE SONGS. Mostly about Chloe and Phyllis and Strephon being wounded by the son of Venus. Such pastoral ditties, due to the sentimental versifiers of the seventeenth century (Suckling, Rochester, Sidney, Herrick and others) remained popular for quite two hundred years; the melodies and the instrumental accompaniments were of the simplest character; hence Dickens's epithet vapid, and his likening Nandy's singing to the strains of a little broken barrel organ ground by a baby.

2. POLLARD OLD MEN. A tree is said to be pollarded when all the branches and twigs are cut off leaving a head (poll) at the top of the trunk to sprout. These old men were therefore mostly bald, or else their hair was cropped very close in the manner of the "workhouses" of the period.

3. BRUISED REED. A simile drawn from Holy Writ (see Isaiah, XLII, 3).

4. FOOT—STANDARD MEASURE. The qualifying phrase is satirically introduced to emphasize the immense figurative gulf separating the old pauper Nandy (who was free) from the aristocratic Dorrit (who was in durance).

5. TRYING ON OTHER PEOPLE'S HATS. A variant of the saying "If the cap fits, etc." Another ingenious variant appears in Book II, Chapter VIII, applied by the selfish Mrs. Gowan.

CHAPTER XXXII

1. THE AMOUNT OF YOUR WHOLE LIFE. No, Arthur; that is not quite true. In Chapter II you were forty and Amy was twenty-two. You are not forty-four yet.

2. WHITE SAND AND GREY SAND. One of the simplest and best known "rounds," musical compositions for equal voices, each singing the same melody, usually in three phrases sung consecutively, producing correct harmony, and going on round and round the company endlessly. "Three Blind Mice" is another example.

3. IN WONDERFUL FEATHER. That is, highly elated or in good spirits, like a bird when it has finished moulting and shews its new brilliant plumage especially during the mating season.

4. PIPES IN FAGGOTS. A faggot is a bundle, so the pipes must have been long clays (or churchwardens) which are usually packed in bundles like sticks.

CHAPTER XXXIII

1. PILLBOX. The box traditionally used by chemists is small and circular, and is so ubiquitous that it is not surprising that anything similarly shaped should be dubbed with the same name, whether it be the small undress cap of a cavalry soldier, a small defensive post in warfare, or a small high-wheeled gig to seat one person.

CHAPTER XXXIV

1. SO-POTENT ART OF PROSPERO. Through his familiar spirit Ariel Prospero is able to cast spells and cause all the characters in the play ("The Tempest") to carry out his will.

2. PASS THE BOTTLE OF SMOKE. In the manner of a small party of Orientals all drawing the smoke from one hookah and handing the mouth-pieces round the company as a token of friendship.

CHAPTER XXXV

1. SPECULATION IN THE COMMON PLEAS. The outcome of litigation is often not a foregone conclusion, and Miss Rugg's action for breach of promise of marriage fortunately turned out successfully.

2. DISTANCE LENDS ENCHANTMENT. A quotation from "The Pleasures of Hope," by Thomas Campbell (1777-1844):

> "'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view
> And robes the mountain in its azure blue."

3. WOODPECKER TAPPING. A favourite song of Dickens (words by Thomas Moore, music by M. Kelly). In *David Copperfield* it is the means of shewing off young Micawber's remarkable head-voice; in *Martin Chuzzlewit* it enables Mrs. Mould to make her only joke; in this book Casby's breakfast egg provides a facetious reference to the object of the bird's method of getting its food.

4. PAY ALL THE DEBTS AS WELL. Under the old law, abolished in 1869, debtors were imprisoned until the original debt was paid, so that, no matter how long the incarceration lasted, the full amount of the debt had still to be liquidated. Hence Little Dorrit's expression, representing Dickens's own opinion of the inequity of the law.

CHAPTER XXXVI

1. WORDS OF THE FETTERED AFRICAN. In 1768 Josiah Wedgwood (1730-1795) the famous potter, issued in his well-known "Wedgwood Ware" a medallion in cameo relief representing a negro in chains, kneeling; the

border of the medallion bore the words: "Am I not a man and a brother?" The Anti-Slavery Society of London (1787) adopted the design for their seal.

2. THE DAY ARRIVED. Emphasis on the importance of this turning point in the fortunes of the Dorrit family is marked by the repetition here of the first paragraph of the chapter, almost word for word.

3. SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY. A character invented by Joseph Addison (1672-1719) as the type of English country gentleman of Queen Anne's reign. He is the principal figure in no less than thirty numbers on "The Spectator" (1711-1714). The incident of his patting the children on the head is the subject of a painting by Dickens's friend C. R. Leslie, R.A. (1794-1859).

4. BUNDLES UP THE STEPS. The steps of private carriages were made to fold up so that they could be packed away inside the vehicle. They could be drawn up from the inside if there were no servant available.

BOOK II

Chapter I

1. DEAD TRAVELLERS. The mortuary by the side of the Hospice has been closed for many years and the gruesome relics are no longer shewn to visitors. Dickens had seen them ten years before he wrote *Little Dorrit*; he tells Forster in a letter dated September 6th, 1846: "Beside the convent, in a little out-house with a grated iron door which you may unbolt for yourself, are the bodies of people found in the snow who have never been claimed and are withering away—not laid down, or stretched out, but standing up, in corners and against walls; some erect and horribly human, with distinct expressions on their faces; some sunk down on their knees; some dropping over on one side; some tumbled down altogether and presenting a heap of skulls and fibrous dust . . ." (Forster's "Life of Dickens.")

2. "SURROUNDED BY SO MANY . . . BUT THE END." The source of this passage within quotation marks has not been traced.

3. BODY OF INCONVENIENCE. The hoary fiction that servants are a nuisance. Mr. Dorrit had surrounded himself, as a tribute to his recovered greatness, with nine attendants—and Mrs. General!

4. FOURGON. A baggage-waggon, made necessary of course by the almost princely manner in which Mr. Dorrit travelled.

Chapter II

1. PHOENIX. Mrs. General. A phoenix among women is unique, and Shakespeare uses the term in this sense, as Dickens probably knew:

> "If she be furnished with a mind so rare,
> She is alone th' Arabian Bird."
>
> "Cymbeline," Act I, Scene 6.

Chapter III

1. VETTURA. An Italian four-wheeled carriage.

Chapter V

1. ENCHANTED PIECE OF CARPET. A quaint conceit, taken from Prince Housain's carpet in the story "Prince Ahmed" in the "Arabian Nights."

2. GLOOMY BRIDGE. In Venice many of the bridges connecting buildings on opposite sides of the canals are covered in: the description of this particular bridge with "dungeon-like opposite tenements" is probably meant to recall to the reader the famous "Bridge of Sighs" which connected the Doge's Palace with the State Prison and the Place of Execution.

3. CELEBRATED MR. EUSTACE. John Chatwode Eustace wrote "A Classical Tour through Italy in 1802," 4 vols., 1817. It was a very popular book and passed through several editions.

4. CATECHISM. The particular passage that would appeal to Mr. Dorrit would be that in the "Duty towards my neighbour": "To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters."

5. BLACKBALL. To blackball is to cast an adverse vote. It comes from the figurative use of black and blacken, to defame. The ballot-box is divided into two parts one being painted white—the YES side, and the other black

—the NO side. The ball used in voting is not, of course, black or onlookers would see how the voting was going; it is dropped in the NO or black side of the ballot-box, the mouth of which is so arranged that the fall of the ball cannot be seen.

CHAPTER VI

1. CATTIVO SOGGETTI MIO. Gowan's bantering way of addressing Blandois in the presence of the ladies: "You naughty creature."

2. GABY. A simpleton, a fool; properly a person who has a vacant face and an open mouth; from the Norse gapa, to gape.

3. OLD FILE. File is a slang term for someone sharp and cunning; the addition of the adjective "old" softens the expression into something almost affectionate, coming from the gaby-like Sparkler.

4. DANTE . . . WHO USED TO PUT LEAVES ROUND HIS HEAD. One of Dickens's irreverences. The statue of the poet at Florence is crowned with a laurel wreath, and so is the profile portrait on the title-page of the Life published in 1521.

5. TEMPORARY SHY (at a new scene). Shy is a slang sporting word for throw or aim and so by transference can mean a trial or venture at a new scene. In its stricter sense Dickens uses shy in *Sketches by Boz* ("Greenwich Fair") "Three Shies a penny" at the cocoanut stand.

7. VENUS'S SON. Venus of the Romans, Aphrodite of the Greeks sprang from the foam (aphros) of the sea; her son was Cupid (Greek Eros). Hence the parallel to Sparkler.

8. CRONIES. No satisfactory etymology has been established for this word, which came into use about the middle of the seventeenth century. It is apparently a university coinage for a close chum or intimate associate. Pepys uses it in his Diary, May 30th, 1665: "Jack Cole, my old schoolfellow, who was a great chrony of mine."

9. LOVE IN A COTTAGE. A comedy by Isaac Bickerstaffe (1735-1812).

10. DEAD AS THE DOGES. The last Doge was elected in 1797 when the Venetian Republic ceased to exist after its conquest by Napoleon. A similar expression occurs in *Bleak House* where at the death of Nemo the medical man says: "dead as Phairy."

CHAPTER VII

1. KEEPING THE PROPRIETIES. That is behaving in a seemly manner, being "proper," just; correct; conforming to the conventions of society so as not to offend Mrs. Grundy, an invisible character in the comedy "Speed the Plough," by Thomas Morton (1798). Mrs. General was just the person to drive her four-in-hand coach (although her team was five) of those celebrated proprieties: Papa, potatoes, poultry, prunes and prism, especially prunes and prism.

2. ORDEAL BY GENERAL. The ancient ordeals by fire, water, or by wager of battle were severe enough, but Little Dorrit's ordeal by General was worse and was only made tolerable by Fanny's continual kindness.

3. CRUEL INSTRUMENTS . . . REEKING. Reeking means smoking, but it is often used loosely as signifying dripping or covered with foulness, and in the passage under consideration Fanny's toilette implements were figuratively dripping with blood from what Mr. Sparkler doubtless thought was his heart.

4. PADDED A THOUSAND MILES. Such "freak" sporting events were at one time not uncommon, mostly it must be stated for exhibition purposes. Robert Barclay, a noted Scotch athlete walked in 1809 a mile in each of one thousand successive hours. A later instance and one which would be fairly fresh in Dickens's memory when he wrote *Little Dorrit* (1855) occurred at the Red House, Battersea, where, in 1851 the pedestrian Searles performed "the dismal feat of walking one thousand miles in one thousand consecutive hours. He walked for six weeks from July 7th to August 18th and an ox was roasted whole in the grounds to celebrate his achievement."

5. MAECENAS. The fame of C. Cilnius Maecenas (died 8 B.C.) rests chiefly on his patronage of literature; here he is used as a name for Mr. Dorrit who patronises Henry Gowan by sitting for his portrait.

To be concluded.

"THE SECOND COURT ON THE RIGHT HAND SIDE"

By S. F. D. HOWARTH

WHEN considering the possible location of this very elusive topographical feature, we should speculate as to the most likely spot at which Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller had arrived at the moment when the former broke his silence (Chap. XX). For a survey of this nature, it seems essential to commence operations from the precise district referred to in the book, and not, as is sometimes done, from the other end of Cheapside, and making for what *appears* to be the "second court."

It is stated that Mr. Pickwick and Sam crossed opposite the Mansion House, that is, when, having arrived at the end of Cornhill, after leaving Dodson and Fogg, they were on the right-hand side of that thoroughfare, and on the same side as the Royal Exchange. At that date, viz., 1827, the predecessor of the present Exchange occupied the same site, but there was then no space in front, as now, the triangular area with which we are familiar being covered with buildings, with a court between them and the Royal Exchange, and another through the centre leading from Cornhill to Threadneedle Street, opposite the Bank of England, known respectively as Castle Alley and Bank Street.

This range of buildings projected a little farther westward than the confines of the existing area might indicate, to a line roughly continued from the west, or Princes Street, wall of the Bank, and approximating to the present corner of Cornhill and Lombard Street.

Having crossed, then, in the direction stated, Mr. Pickwick "bent his steps up Cheapside," and, as inferred in the text, leaving an interval before entering into conversation with Sam Weller. There is here no mention of the Poultry, that short section of street which acts as a kind of introductory avenue to Cheapside and which extends from Saint Mildred's Court as far as the eastern corner of Old Jewry. This court in those days was immediately contiguous to the east end of St. Mildred's Church, demolished in 1872, on which site is now the Midland Bank, and was thus the first court at which the party would arrive. The indefinite space opposite the Mansion House, then, and until recent years known as Mansion House Street, need not detain us apart from helping to visualize the arrival there of Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller.

The following court was Grocers Hall Court, a little further up; and these two complete the sum of courts on the right hand side of the Poultry.

When we arrive in Cheapside proper, which commences at the west corner of Old Jewry, we find that the *first* court on the right hand side is Freemans Court, with a bend to the right into Lawrence Lane. A short distance up is the *second* court, then known as Honey Lane, and later as Honey Lane Market, leading to a small market so called. We are thus presented with an alternative site to choose from, and, in an attempt to determine the relative claims of all or both, it will be of interest to try and ascertain either by actual essay on the spot, or by inference, how long those few words spoken to Sam Weller would have taken to utter, and whereabouts the two might possibly have been at the time.

It seems fairly obvious that after leaving Dodson & Fogg's, the proceedings that had taken place and the proceedings that *were* to take place in the matter of Mrs. Bardell, had rankled in Mr. Pickwick's mind, and his determination of seeing Perker, suddenly communicated

to Sam Weller, was the result of his pent-up feelings, and, as we know, they had then crossed over the road opposite the Mansion House, and were making for Cheapside.

The remarks addressed to Sam Weller by Mr. Pickwick take half a minute to enunciate, and if we suppose them to have been somewhere near St. Mildred's Court at the time, and continuing their walk, they would by then have reached Grocers Hall Court, because there seems to have been a sufficient interval after they had arrived opposite the Mansion House, during which Sam Weller "began to wonder where they were going."

Reference to the view taken at this spot by Thomas Shotter Boys about 1840, his vantage point being at the junction of Cornhill and Lombard Street when the neighbourhood would have altered very little since 1827, shews the section of street opposite the Mansion House clearly depicted, with the corner of Princes Street and the

Eastern Cheapside as shown in Horwood's Map, 1799

tower of St. Mildred's Church in the middle distance. It is not always easy to reconstruct earlier buildings on a later line, and after the lapse of some hundred years, any attempt to calculate whether the distance from the *present* corner of Princes Street to St. Mildred's Court, or its modern counterpart is the same as it was in 1827, may be inconclusive. A variation of the distance between these two points appears implied from a comparison of this site as it exists to-day with the drawing of Boys already referred to, which shews at least seven (*) houses on that side in addition to the building at the Princes Street corner, where now there would not apparently be space for such a number, occupying a comparable area. The distance at the present time is some 50 yards, on the basis of 30 inches to a pace, but at the period with which we are dealing the west side of Princes Street was not straight but curved somewhat at the Bank corner, thus giving an additional frontage in Mansion House Street.

At this stage the reader may usefully refer to the plan opposite which shews the locality with which we are dealing. This plan is taken from Horwood's Map for 1799, and indicates the layout which existed at that time and for some years afterwards. The principal changes before 1830 were the rebuilding of the Bank of England and the straightening of Princes Street. The range of buildings in front of the Royal Exchange, already referred to, will be noticed, and the houses running from the corner of Princes Street to St. Mildred's Court, in front of the Mansion House. It will be observed that an opening or passage-way occurs between St. Mildred's Court and Grocers Hall Court, which led to the Poultry Compter, and proceeding from King Street up Cheapside, there will be seen between the letters S and I of the word "CHEAPSIDE," a court with a right-hand turn into Lawrence Lane: this is Freeman's Court, and it is followed by Honey Lane on the left hand of the plan.

Assuming, then, that our friends had arrived at Grocers Hall Court, or somewhere between there and St. Mildred's Court, it hardly seems likely that Sam Weller would at that particular moment have told Pickwick that they were at or near the tavern he had in mind. Had that been the case, he would more logically have used some different expression, and not referred to "the second court on the right-hand side." If, however, no words had passed for a longer period than that assumed, it would appear that we may safely ignore the courts so far noticed in the Poultry, and concentrate on those in Cheapside.

We have seen that the first court in Cheapside was, and is, Freemans Court, and the second, Honey Lane, and in going over a few of the considerations which indicate the selection of the latter as fulfilling to a greater degree the requirements of the story, we should bear in mind the type of patron of the tavern to which Mr. Pickwick, and the reader are introduced, and the apparent exclusive character of stage coachmen. Close by, at that period, were several well-known inns, the principal being the "Blossoms Inn" in Lawrence Lane; the "Cross Keys" in Wood Street, and the "Saracen's Head" in Friday Street; and it is logical to suppose that the emphasis laid on the class of customers was not accidental, and tends by this very circumstance to indicate the tavern's proximity to these public establishments.

As an additional help in elucidating this matter, it may be of interest to gain an idea of the activities carried on at about the period of the *Pickwick Papers* by the tenants in Grocers Hall Court and Honey Lane, the details of which are taken from "Robson's Register" for 1830, and will be found hereunder.

* From "Robson's Register," referred to hereafter, there were eight houses in Mansion House Street, numbered 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 10.

Grocers Hall Court

No.	1	Waugh & Flint ...merchants	No.	5	Dalrymple ...bill broker
	3	Metcalfe .....printer			Rayner .....iron merchant
	4	Dinwiddie .....merchant			Nettleship
		Cope, C. H. & Co. agents			Bicknell ...solicitors
		Whittenbury .....agent		11	Thorowgood printer

Honey Lane

*	No. 1	Fairchild .....butcher	
*	3	Pead .....ham dealer	

Our next consideration will be Freemans Court, and here we find the following:

Freemans Court

Burton Coffee House

" Poulterers Arms " Tavern

From the foregoing it will be seen that in neither of the *second* courts to which consideration has been given, is there any establishment devoted to refreshment, and that the only comparable place seems to be in Freemans Court, which actually is the *first* court " on the right hand side " in Cheapside. Was the site fictitious, and based on details met with elsewhere, or at the *first* court, and at the " Poulterers Arms " ?

(The " Poulterers Arms " disappeared in the air raids of 1940-41, but from its external appearance would have fitted in with the architecture of the Pickwick period.)

As an appendix there will be found below a list of residents in St. Mildred's Court in 1830, which will indicate the class of business carried on there, and which may be regarded as being well established at that time.

St. Mildred's Court Poultry.

No.			No.		
	1	Sir Jno. W. Lubbock & Co. bankers		6	Edward John Scott solicitor
	3	Young & Vallings solicitors			Robert Spencer .....solicitor
		Jacob Montefiore ...merchant			George Bolton .....solicitor
		Gadsden ..... ?	†	7	Parton & Ellis .....solicitors
	4	Jno. G. & W. S. Fry wholesale tea dealers		8	Wm. B. Ogden .....solicitor
		Nathl. Winter & Co. .....merchants			Jos. Wilkinson & Co. bill brokers
		John Innes.....merchant			James Atkinson ...bill broker
	5	Joseph Bowyer .....carpet manufacturer		9	E. & H. Williams ...merchants
					Thos. Bartrum .....solicitor

* According to the maps of the period there appears to have been an opening or court between these two Numbers, running parallel with Cheapside.

† In 1836 occupied by Bush & Masher, solicitors.

KEY TO "A PICKWICK EXAM. PAPER"

(See Vol. xli, p. 189).

The prize, a copy of *Pickwick* illustrated by Frank Reynolds, has been awarded to Miss Maud Melville Fowler, of Chelmsford, Essex, who submitted an almost complete list of correct answers. The second place was attained by Mrs. Amos E. Kraybill, of Asbury Park, New Jersey, U.S.A., and the third by Miss Edith M. Davies, of Balham, London.

1. According to the testimony of Mrs. Sanders given at the Trial, Mrs. Mudberry kept a mangle. (Ch. XXXIII.)
2. Harris, the greengrocer, at whose premises the Bath footmen held their "swarry." Mrs. Harris assisted with the serving. (Ch. XXXVI.)
3. "Whitewashing" was a euphemism for the process by which the suitors at the Insolvent Court obtained their discharge. In the first instance Mr. Pell's client, the coach horser, had emerged triumphantly from his examination, and again, Mr. Weller, on visiting his son in the Fleet, was observed by him to have white on his clothes, causing the old gentleman to deprecate its appearance in such a place. (Chs. XLIII and XLV.)
4. By the boys dispersing to cricket, in the words of Grummer. (Ch. XXIV.)
5. Mr. Weller, on the subject of prophets, regretted that there was not one handy to confirm his suspicions that the deputy shepherd had the liver complaint. (Ch. XLIII.)
6. The gentleman, the subject of Sam Weller's story of the crumpets, was in the habit, when dining at his chop-house, of waylaying the boy with the evening paper, to obtain the first sight, much to the disgust of a fellow diner, upon whom, we are told, the waiter kept his eye, in case he committed some rash act with the carving knife. (Ch. XLII.)
7. That the so-called shepherds should be compelled to propel a wheelbarrow along a fourteen-inch wide plank. (Ch. XXVII.)
8. Ben Allen and Bob Sawyer. They both eventually proceeded to India in the service of the East India Company. (Chs. XXIX and LVI.)
9. At the Spaniards Tea Gardens, by Mr. Raddle when ordering tea for seven, it being complained that Tommy Bardell could have drunk from someone else's cup. At the monthly meeting of the Brick Lane Branch of the United Grand Junction Ebenezer Temperance Association, when one old lady was stated by Mr. Weller to be drowning herself in tea. (Chs. XLVI and XXXIII.)
10. Isaac, who accompanied Mr. Jackson to the Spaniards, when effecting the arrest of Mrs. Bardell. He was an attendant on the Sheriff's officer, sometimes known as a "follower." (Ch. XLVI.)
11. To France, on disposing of the business. (Ch. XIV.)
12. Bob Sawyer, when first seen by Mr. Winkle at the apothecary's shop in Bristol. (Ch. XXXVIII.)
13. Cobham. June. (Ch. XI.)
14. Mr. Winkle, senior, of Birmingham. He first met Arabella Allen, the young lady with the black eyes, at the "George and Vulture." (Ch. LVI.)
15. £133 6*s*. 4*d*. Mr. Perker paid the amount by cheque. (Ch. LII.)
16. At Bob Sawyer's shop in Bristol there was only one tumbler, which was allotted to Mr. Winkle. Ben Allen and Bob Sawyer were accommodated respectively with a funnel with a cork in it and a graduated beaker. (Ch. XXXVIII.)
17. According to Sam Weller, his father was totally incapable of looking after his money, and was quite likely to lend it, or waste it, or drop his pocket-book down an area. The pocket-book was eventually given into Mr. Pickwick's keeping, who invested the contents on Mr. Weller's behalf. (Ch. LVI.)
18. Of personal attractions, in this case those of Mrs. Weller (implied); and of drinks, on visiting Sam Weller in the Fleet. (Ch. XXVII and XLIV.)
19. The bagman's uncle. (Ch. XLVIII.)
20. Mr. Winkle gained courage on three occasions—on that of the duel at Fort Pitt, in its being discovered that he was not the person who had offended Dr. Slammer at the "Bull"; again, when accused by

Mr. Pott of trifling with his wife's affections, Mr. Winkle gained courage "as he saw Pott losing it," after an argument with Mrs. P. The third occasion was at the "Bush" in Bristol, on finding Dowler there, disposed to apologise for his late conduct at Bath. (Chs. II, XVIII and XXXVII.)

21. At the former a bit of fish and a steak was the fare, while at the latter they were content with soda-water. (Chs. XXII and L.)
22. An inmate of the Fleet Prison who, allowed by the turnkey to pay a brief visit to the outside world, came back in two minutes complaining that he had nearly been run over. "Veels vithin veels, a prison in a prison," Sam's allusion to the birdcage in the Fleet. (Chs. XLI and XL.)
23. By marrying Mr. Nupkin's cook, and setting up in the chandlery business. (Ch. XXIII.)
24. An expression of "light and airy sarcasm," employed by Mr. Martin and his friends in derision of Mr. Pickwick's ignorance of the world, as exemplified in the Fleet in particular. They offered Mr. P. 3/6 to be "payed out," and forego his "chummage" upon them. (Ch. XLI.)
25. According to Sam Weller they had a flavour of warm flat irons. Mr. Pickwick drank ½-pint before breakfast and ½-pint after breakfast. (Chs. XXXVII and XXVI.)
26. Twelve. There were four belonging to Mrs. Raddle, the remainder being borrowed from a public-house, the whole being apportioned among Bob Sawyer, Ben Allen, Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Snodgrass, Mr. Tupman, Mr. Winkle, Jack Hopkins, Noddy (the scorbutic youth), the man in the black wig, Gunter (the man with the pink anchors on his shirt), a pale youth and the prim man who wore cloth boots. (Ch. XXXII.)
27. Bootmaker. His name was discovered in Miss Rachel Wardle's shoes, at the "White Hart" in the Borough. (Ch. X.)
28. (1) Mr. Weller, when given a twenty-pound note to overset his coach containing voters, and (2) Mr. Pickwick in his effort to expose the assumed machinations of Mr. Jingle at Westgate House. (Chs. XIII and XVI.)
29. To ink, when Mr. Pickwick hurled the inkstand after the retreating Jingle at the "White Hart," which had no effect on him as he was out of reach. (Ch. X.)
30. By Mr. Tuckle dancing the frog horn-pipe on the table, accompanied by a comb and tissue-paper. (Ch. XXXVI.)
31. Their apparant aversion to soap and water. (Ch. XX.)
32. His uncle, who died of drink. (Ch. XXXVII.)
33. Six times. This was the term used by Mr. Jingle to signify the pawn shop or "Uncle's." (Ch. XLII.)
34. On Lowten calling on Mr. Perker at his residence in Montague Place and informing him that Dodson & Fogg had taken Mrs. Bardell in execution for their costs, Mr. Perker remarked that they were the cleverest scamps he had ever had anything to do with. (Ch. XLVII.)
35. Fifty-eight. (Ch. XXII.)
36. (1) Silver. (2) Copper. (Chs. XXIII and XXXVII.)
37. From his priming Mr. Magnus as to his conduct when proposing to the middle-aged lady at Ipswich; and in the reference to the privations of shipwrecked people which he is stated to have read in "Constable's Miscellany," a propos of Jingle's statement that he and Job Trotter had existed for three weeks on a pair of boots and an ivory-handled umbrella. (Chs. XXIV and XLII.)
38. One shilling. (Ch. XIX.)

FROM RECENT BOOKS

By LOUIS B. FREWER, M.A.
(Bodleian Library)

MRS. GASKELL

"Such was the balance she achieved between emotion and reason that, living in the very heart of the industrial conflict so poignantly described in her first novel, she took no sides. Through the real flesh-and-blood characters of her creation, she presented the facts impartially, and allowed the facts to speak for themselves. Not even Dickens, who, as editor of *Household Words*, gave her such warm encouragement, glowed with more passionate pity for the poor. But she had a firmer hold upon herself, and a truer grasp of the social problem, than Dickens—or, again, than Disraeli. Dickens effectively attacked specific abuses, but a vague charity was his only constructive note."—"Builders and Makers," by Gilbert Thomas. (Epworth Press.)

* * * * *

ANTHONY TROLLOPE

"Thackeray and Dickens followed Balzac in scratching and biting the unfortunate middle class with savage ill-temper.

"It was sixteen years after the river steamer bearing Frances Trollope and her troupe had snorted away from New Orleans on the voyage to Memphis, that Charles Dickens began the writing of *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Yet the American chapters of that enchanting tale might have been written from notes taken on the tragi-comic journey of the earlier, obscurer novelist. The adventures and observations of Frances Trollope anticipate those of Martin and Mark Tapley with a completeness so amazing as virtually to prove the authenticity of both.

"'It is a great mistake,' wrote one [reviewer], 'and a still greater injustice to suppose that Mrs. Trollope offers "Michael Armstrong" as anything like a pendant to the admirable works of Mr. Dickens. The leading characteristic of those works is humour. But "Michael Armstrong" has a deeper design . . . It is evidently intended to be a deep moral satire . . .'

"'Jessie Phillips' . . . was written four years after Harriet Martineau had attacked *Oliver Twist* on the ground that Dickens had charged against the new Poor Law the evil consequences of the old. Frances Trollope admired Dickens and had made his acquaintance in 1838. She did not admire Miss Martineau and well remembered that lady's hostility to her own American opinions. It is not impossible, therefore, that 'Jessie Phillips' was written to some small extent against Miss Martineau . . .

"'The Warden': Observe, further, that the passages most pleasing to the critic are the very passages which, in the view of a lover of Trollope to-day, almost spoil the book. The heavy-handed playfulness in chapters fourteen and fifteen, where 'The Times,' Carlyle and Dickens are in turn put through the primitive mangle of Trollope's satire, struck the reader of the 'fifties as genial and true (as perhaps they are), but not as extraneous to the story's theme . . .

"His books, like Thackeray's, hardly contain a single fine picture of the country, of the sea, of mountains or of rivers. Compared with Fielding, Scott, Charlotte Bronte, Dickens, George Eliot, he is a man blind to the loveliness of nature.

"Art and philosophy, as things of independent spiritual significance, lay beyond his mental reach; but set him to appraise or to unravel the working of an idea or of an aspiration which has direct bearing on the existence and behaviour of ordinary people, and he shows a subtlety and judgment rivalled by one other novelist only. For it is in this aspect of his work that may most clearly be discerned his spiritual kinship with Charles Dickens. When George Santayana wrote of Dickens the words which follow, he might with equal truth have been writing of Trollope:

> 'It is remarkable, in spite of his ardent simplicity and openness of heart, how insensible Dickens was to the greater themes of the human imagination—religion, science, politics, art. Perhaps, properly speaking, he had no *ideas* on any subject; what he had was a vast sympathetic participation in the daily life of mankind.'

"This is no fanciful parallel between Dickens and Trollope. Each had his sphere of understanding; Dickens is as uncertain a creator of persons of the upper-middle class as Trollope is of humbler folk; but the two had a common inspiration and a common instinct—the inspiration of humanity and the instinct for its interpretation. Both lacked a lively sense for fine art, for the power of spiritual principle or for natural beauty; but both, where dramatic force in landscape or in the handiwork of man could help to illustrate a character, called it to their aid and worked it dexterously.

"What Friswell has to say of Trollope is for the most part negligible: but his comments on Trollope illustrators are shrewd enough . . .

> 'Trollope's pictures of an age very poor and weak in its nature . . . have found an excellent illustrator in a man who has great merit, but which the age persists in accepting as an illustrative artist—you might as well call him a balloonist—John Everett Millais. He is as well fitted to Trollope as Phiz is to Dickens. When Phiz tried to illustrate our author, as he did in "Can you forgive her?" he failed miserably; he actually put life and humour into some of the figures under which Trollope had written descriptions dry as old nuts, but singularly descriptive of the author and his mind.'

"'Of course I will do what you ask me about the proofs of the Dickens paper. You must send them to the Brevoort House. If you could have got Dickens to do it for you in London it would have been better.'

[Footnote reads] "Dickens had been in New York in January, 1868, and had given readings from *David Copperfield* and other works. Kate Field had made his acquaintance and become friendly with him. She promptly began work on her 'Pen Photographs of Charles Dickens Readings' (under this rather foolish title the collection of brief essays was published in Boston in 1868) and was anxious that the proofs should be seen by Dickens himself with a view to the publication in England of one or all of the papers. As a later letter shows, Dickens would not consent to their issue in his own country.

"'And now about your MS.—as to which I should doubtless have written with more alacrity had I had good news to send. I lost not a moment in applying to Dickens after my return home, but I found that he was opposed to the publication altogether; and I also found, as I was sure would be the case, that without his co-operation the publication with any good results would be altogether impossible. You may take it for granted that he would not like it. I greatly grieve that you should have had so much fruitless labour in preparing the paper for publication here.

[Footnote reads] "It is sad to have to record that, after Dickens's death, Kate Field acted contrary to his expressed desire. 'Pen Photographs' was published in London in a 'new and revised edition' in 1871.

"There are, of course, certain qualities that Trollope as a novelist emphatically does not possess. He is no great philanthropist like Dickens . . .

"It is this almost pugnacious acceptance of reality that distinguishes him from all other novelists of standing. It lies at the root of his difference from Jane Austen, from Sir Walter Scott, from Dickens, from Thackeray, and from George Eliot.

"Undoubtedly 'The Three Clerks' was derivative—in ultimate resort from Dickens, nearer at hand from such a Dickens imitator as Frank Smedley . . .

"The central idea is too slight for its framework; subsidiary plots and rather heavy knockabout (the comic elements in 'The Bertrams' are a mistaken tribute, partly to Dickens, mainly to Thackeray) cluster about the central theme and overshadow it."—"Trollope, a Commentary," by Michael Sadleir. New Edition, revised. (First published, 1927.) (Constable.)

* * * * *

LORD SHAFTESBURY

"By obtaining the appointment of the Committee of Enquiry, and by acting as its Chairman and galvanising it into speedy and effective action, he [Shaftesbury] secured the publication of its report in the summer of 1832. . . . One witness said he had three children, the youngest 'going eight.' Sometimes they had worked in the mill from three in the morning till after ten at night. A year or so later Charles Dickens made the only possible comment: 'I went some weeks ago to Manchester and saw the worst cotton mill. And then I saw the best. There was no great difference between them.'

" Eventually, in 1851, he was able to introduce two Housing Bills into the Commons with a fair chance of success . . . the second Bill proved invaluable for it authorised the registration and inspection of lodging-houses already in existence. Dickens declared it to be the best measure ever passed in Parliament, a pardonable exaggeration by one whose whole being burned with indignation at the miseries of the poor, and who had drawn in the pages of *Bleak House* a memorable picture of Tom All Alone's, the home of Jo the crossing-sweeper."—" Lord Shaftesbury," by F. M. G. Higham. (S.C.M. Press.)

* * * * *

VIRGINIA WOOLF

" From Virginia Woolf's prose at this stage there emanates a conviction that the reader will understand, that he is sensitive and civilised and can adjust his sensibility easily to the author's vision, however unique that may be. We find nothing of this in the great nineteenth-century novelists, in Scott or Dickens or Thackeray, none of this sense of equality with the reader (an aesthetic equality, not a community of attitude : the latter belongs more to the older writers)."—" Virginia Woolf," by David Daiches. (Editions Poetry, London.)

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

THE opening of the first peace-time season has seen a great revival of activity among the Branches throughout the United Kingdom. Many which have remained quiescent during the war have sprung to life once more and those which were able to carry on are already extending their plans. Among the former are Bristol, Hull, Leyton and Plymouth. The Nottingham Branch opened its season with a gay Victory Meeting at which the Hon. Secretary from London was the guest of the evening. The Manchester Branch staged a dramatic version of *Our Mutual Friend* for three performances which was attended with great success. Southend was another Branch which opened with a festive evening in honour of Victory. Meanwhile the most attractive programmes continue to reach us from all over the country, announcing series of valuable lectures. One of the most outstanding of the latter was given recently at the Rochester Branch by Mr. Ralph Straus. His lecture on " Some Friends of Dickens " gripped an attentive audience which included the Dean (President of the Branch) and Mrs. Crick and the Editor of *The Dickensian*.

In planning their future, Branches are earnestly commended to the Walter Dexter Memorial Fund for the Endowment of the Dickens House. Our National Memorial to Charles Dickens is still entirely unendowed.

The thanks of the Dickens Fellowship are due to the following retiring Hon. Secretaries : Mrs. Bannister and Miss L. R. Keast (Bromley), Mr. F. C. Grimes (Gloucester), and Mr. F. J. Hudson (Rugby). Congratulations and good wishes are accorded to their successors, Mrs. Mabel Cole, Miss E. A. Dackin and Mr. W. F. Lucking, respectively.

VANCOUVER BRANCH

A MOST successful season was enjoyed by members of the Vancouver, B.C. Branch. Eight regular meetings were held and these included addresses, sketches in costume by members of our Dickens' Group and musical numbers. We were privileged to have as our guest speakers Mrs. Dorothy Steeves, a Member of the Provincial Legislative Assembly ; the Hon. H. H. Stevens,, Minister of Trade and Commerce in a former Dominion Government ; Captain Watson Armstrong, Consul for the Netherlands ; Rev. J. D. Hobden, President of the John Howard Society ; and Ernest Walter, Journalist and Past President.

Our Annual Birthday Celebration was attended by upwards of two hundred members and friends and the toast to the Immortal Memory was proposed by our Honorary Life President, the Honourable Mr. Justice Sidney Smith, who displayed a most intimate knowledge of the works of our beloved Author, quoting many passages from memory and happily sharing with us

the delights which those pages afford. On Sunday, the 10th June, 1945, a Memorial Service was held at the Chown Memorial Church and was conducted by Rev. E. F. Church, fifty members being present. The lesson, in praise of Famous Men, taken from the Book of Ecclesiasticus, was read by the well-known Australian Character Artist, Mr. Clement May, who is also a member of our Branch.

Another outstanding event was the arrival at the Port of Vancouver of the 10,000 ton freighter "Empire Pickwick," which took part in D Day operations and had also taken supplies to Murmansk. This was the occasion for a meeting with the genial Captain, who extended a most cordial invitation to members of the Executive Council to dine with him on the ship. Captain Jack related some of his experiences and referred to the many happy connections which he had formed through his association with "Empire Pickwick." He also paid a very high tribute to the late Mr. Walter Dexter, with whom he had conversed over the telephone in London shortly before his death. Mr. E. W. Dean, the G.O.M. of the Vancouver Branch, in the absence of the President, presented Captain Jack with a framed picture of the immortal Pickwick.

Our efforts on behalf of the sufferers in the bombed areas of Britain have met with a very hearty response, not only from our own members, but also from the general public. One friend of our organisation, a Mrs. G. Stroyan, who had already given a Tea Cloth, most generously donated a handsome Luncheon Cloth worked by herself and in connection with which tickets were sold and the overseas fund benefited to the extent of $260.00. We were happy indeed to learn the other day that our last shipment of nine barrels of clothing had arrived in Britain in excellent condition.

A. M. C.

BROMLEY, KENT, BRANCH

Our geographical position to the south-east of London caused the Bromley Branch to suspend all its meetings during the six years of the war; many of our members suffered damage and loss from enemy action and the homes of both of our Secretaries were destroyed, entailing the disappearance of all our records (Minutes of Meetings, etc.). The lady members formed a Knitting Party that met regularly weekly throughout the war with the exception of only seven days. They and their friends collected by donations the sum of £77 18*s*. 6*d*. and spent £76 of this amount to supply woollen garments (sea-boot stockings, pullovers, etc.) for seamen, through the Department for Knitted Garments for the Royal Navy, for which the Branch became an official sub-depot. The balance of £1 18*s*. 6*d*. has been added to the Walter Dexter Memorial Fund, in aid of which the Bromley Branch has decided to devote one half of its meetings in the present season. The Branch also raised over £40 for the relief of "distressed areas" during the industrial depression of 1939, and for various charities connected with the war. Our new season opened on October 22nd, when Mr. Percy Merriman gave a series of readings and impersonations from some lesser known "By-ways in Dickens's Books."

T. W. H.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to record the death at the advanced age of 97, of Mr. Rowland Hill, so long President of the Bedford Branch, whose familiar figure will be sadly missed from future Conferences, for he was a prominent participant in these annual gatherings for many years. His enthusiasm for Dickens extended throughout his life and he was probably among the last survivors of Dickens's audiences at the famous Readings. These Mr. Hill several times attended including the last occasion on which the novelist read in London. Prominently associated with a great variety of activities in Bedford, he will leave a gap in the public life of that town which will be difficult to fill.

We also regretfully announce the death of:—

Mrs. Bowers	*Headquarters.*
Mr. A. J. Polson	*Headquarters.*
Mrs. E. J. Shaw	*Headquarters.*
Miss S. G. Toplis	*Headquarters.*

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